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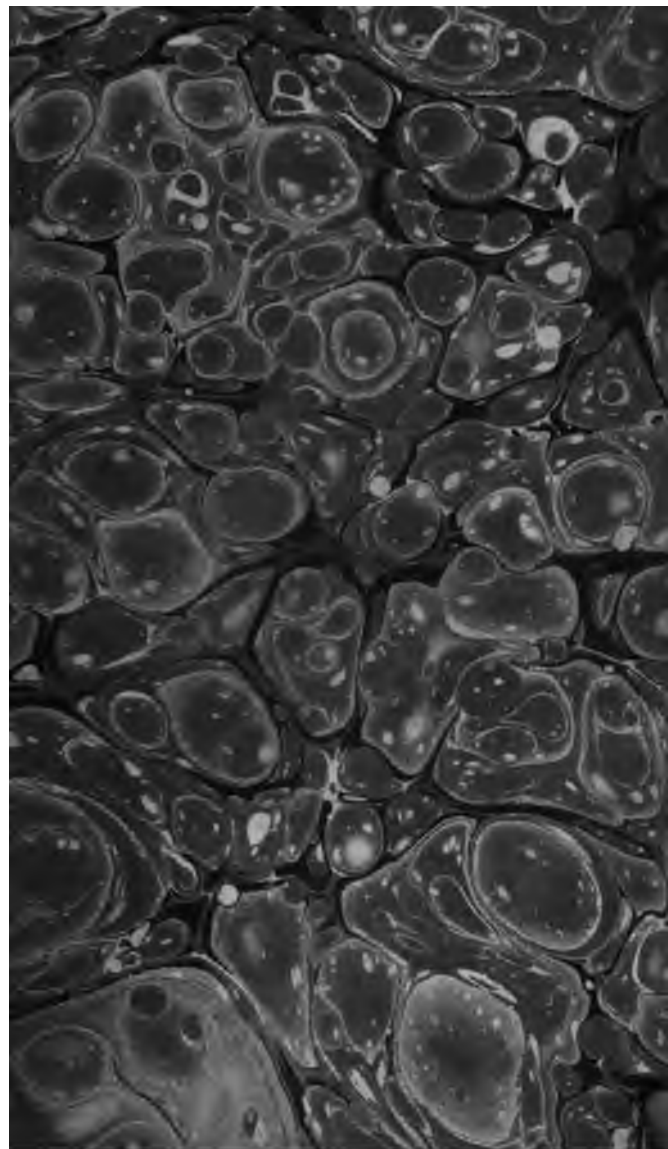
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Benjamin Humphrey Smart





Printed by J. Brettell, Marshall-street, Golden-square, London.

THE PARISH REGISTER:

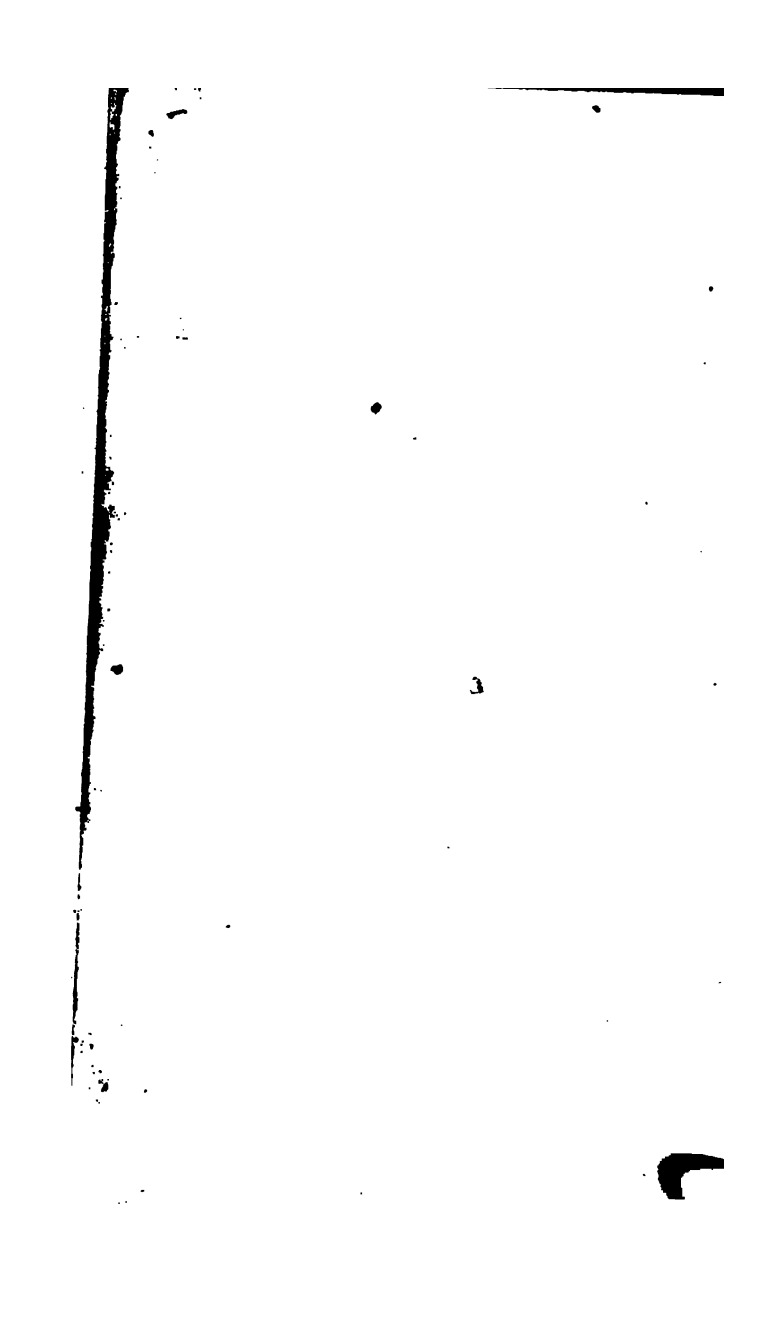
PART III.

BURIALS.

VOL. II.

E

280. f. 2071





9
POEMS:

BY

THE REV. GEORGE CRABBE, LL.B.

*Ipsæ per Ausonias Æneïa carmina gentes
Qui sonat, ingenti qui nomine pulsat Olympum;
Mædoniumque senem Romano provocat ore:
Forsitan illius nemoris latuisset in umbrâ
Quod canit, et sterili tantum cantasset avenâ
Ignotus populi; si Mæcenate careret.*

Paneg. ad Phœnes, Lucan.

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THE PARISH REGISTER :

PART III.

BURIALS.

VOL. II.

B

ARGUMENT.

True Christian resignation not frequently to be seen.—The Register a melancholy Record.—A dying Man, who at length sends for a Priest: for what Purpose? answered.—Old *Collett* of the Inn, an instance of Dr. Young's slow-sudden Death: his Character and Conduct.—The Manners and Management of the Widow *Goe*: her successful Attention to Business: her Decease unexpected.—The Infant-Boy of *Gerard Ablet* dies: Reflections on his Death, and the Survivor his Sister-Twin.—The Funeral of the Deceased Lady of the Manor described: her neglected Mansion: Undertaker and Train: the Character which her Monument will hereafter display.—Burial of an antient Maiden: some former Drawback on her Virgin-fame: Description of her House and Household: Her Manners, Apprehensions, Death.—*Isaac Ashford*, a virtuous Peasant, dies: his manly Character: Reluctance to enter the Poor-House; and why.—Misfortune and Derangement of Intellect in *Robin Dingley*: whence they proceeded: He is not restrained by Misery from a wandering Life: his various returns to his Parish: his final Return.—Wife of Farmer *Frankford*, dies in prime of Life: Affliction in consequence of such Death: melancholy View of her House, &c. on her Family's Return from her Funeral: Address to Sorrow.—*Leah Cousins*, a Midwife: her Character; and successful Practice: at length opposed by *Doctor Glibb*: Opposition in the Parish: Argument of the Doctor; of *Leah*: her Failure and Decease.—Burial of *Roger Cuff*, a Sailor: his Enmity to his Family: how it originated: his Experiment and its consequence.—The Register terminates.—A Bell heard: Inquiry for whom? The Sexton.—Character of Old *Dobbie*, and the five Rectors whom he served.—Reflections.—Conclusion.

THE
PARISH REGISTER:

PART III.

Burials.

Qui vultus Acherontis atri,
Qui Stygia tristem, non tristis, videt,—

Par ille Regi, par Superis erit.

Seneca in Agamem.

THERE was, 'tis said, and I believe, a time,
When humble Christians died with views sublime ;
When all were ready for their Faith to bleed,
But few to write or wrangle for their Creed ;
When lively Faith upheld the sinking heart,
And friends, assur'd to meet, prepar'd to part ;

When Love felt hope, when Sorrow grew serene,
And all was comfort in the death-bed scene.

Alas ! when now the gloomy King they wait,
'Tis weakness yielding to resistless fate ;
Like wretched men upon the ocean cast,
They labour hard and struggle to the last ;
“ Hope against hope,” and wildly gaze around,
In search of help that never shall be found :
Nor, till the last strong billow stops the breath,
Will they believe them in the jaws of Death !

When these my Records I reflecting read,
And find what ills these numerous births succeed ;
What powerful griefs these nuptial ties attend,
With what regret these painful journeys end ;
When from the cradle to the grave I look,
Mine I conceive a melancholy book.

Where now is perfect resignation seen ?
Alas ! it is not on the Village Green :—

I've seldom known, though I have often read
Of happy Peasants on their dying-bed ;
Whose looks proclaim'd that sunshine of the breast,
That more than hope, that Heav'n itself express'd.

What I behold are feverish fits of strife,
'Twixt fears of dying and desire of life :
Those earthly hopes, that to the last endure ;
'Those fears, that hopes superior fail to cure ;
At best a sad submission to the doom,
Which, turning from the danger, lets it come.

Sick lies the Man, bewilder'd, lost, afraid,
His spirits vanquish'd and his strength decay'd ;
No hope the Friend, the Nurse, the Doctor lend—
“ Call then a Priest and fit him for his end.”
A Priest is call'd ; 'tis now, alas ! too late,
Death enters with him at the cottage-gate ;
Or time allow'd—he goes, assur'd to find
The self-commending, all-confiding mind ;

And sighs to hear what we may justly call,
Death's *Common-place*, the train of thought in all.

“ True, I'm a sinner,” feebly he begins,
“ But trust in Mercy to forgive my sins :”
(Such cool confession no past crimes excite !
Such claim on Mercy seems the sinner's right !)
“ I know, Mankind are frail, that God is just,
“ And pardons those who in his Mercy trust ;
“ We're sorely tempted in a world like this,
“ All men have done, and I like all, amiss ;
“ But now, if spar'd, it is my full intent,
“ On all the past to ponder and repent ;
“ Wrongs against me I pardon great and small,
“ And if I die, I die in peace with all.”

His merits thus and not his sins confest,
He speaks his hopes and leaves to Heav'n the rest
Alas ! are these the prospects, dull and cold,
That dying Christians to their Priests unfold ?

Or mends the prospect when th' Enthusiast cries,
" I die assur'd !" and in a rapture dies ?

Ah, where that humble, self-abasing mind,
With what confiding Spirit shall we find ;
The mind that, feeling what repentance brings,
Dejection's terrors and Contrition's stings,
Feels then the hope, that mounts all care above,
And the pure joy that flows from pardoning love ?

Such have I seen in Death, and much deplore,
So many dying—that I see no more :
Lo ! now my Records, where I grieve to trace,
How Death has triumph'd in so short a space ;
Who are the Dead, how died they, I relate,
And snatch some portion of their acts from fate.

With *Andrew Collett*, we the year begin,
The blind, fat landlord of the Old Crown-Inn,—
Big as his butt, and, for the self-same use,
To take in stores of strong fermenting juice.

On his huge chair beside the fire he sate,
In revel chief, and umpire in debate ;
Each night his string of vulgar tales he told ;
When ale was cheap and bachelors were bold ;
His heroes all were famous in their days,
Cheats were his boast and drunkards had his praise ;
“ One, in three draughts, three mugs of ale took down,
“ As mugs were then—the champion of the Crown ;
“ For thrice three days another liv’d on ale,
“ And knew no change but that of mild and stale ;
“ Two thirsty soakers watch’d a vessel’s side,
“ When he the tap, with dextrous hand, applied ;
“ Nor from their seats departed, till they found
“ That butt was out and heard the mournful sound.”

He prais’d a Poacher, precious child of fun !
Who shot the Keeper with his own spring-gun ;
Nor less the Smuggler who the Exciseman tied,
And left him hanging at the birch-wood side,

There to expire;—but one who saw him hang,
Cut the good cord—a traitor of the gang.

His own exploits, with boastful glee he told,
What ponds he empty'd and what pikes he sold ;
And how, when blest with sight alert and gay,
The night's amusements kept him through the day.

He sang the praises of those times, when all
“ For cards and dice, as for their drink, might call ;
“ When justice wink'd on every jovial crew,
“ And ten-pins tumbled in the Parson's view.”

He told, when angry Wives, provok'd to rail,
Or drive a third-day drunkard from his ale,
What were his triumphs, and how great the skill
That won the vex'd Virago to his will ;
Who raving came ;—then talk'd in milder strain,—
Then wept,—then drank and pledg'd her Spouse again.
Such were his themes : how knaves o'er laws prevail,
Or, when made captives, how they fly from jail ;

The Young how brave, how subtle were the Old :
And oaths attested all that Folly told.

On death like his what name shall we bestow,
So very sudden ! yet so very slow ?
'Twas slow :—Disease, augmenting year by year,
Show'd the grim king by gradual steps brought near :
'Twas not less sudden ;—in the night he died,
He drank, he swore, he jested, and he lied ;
Thus aiding folly with departing breath :—
“ Beware, *Lorenzo*, the slow-sudden death.”

Next died the Widow *Goe*, an active dame,
Fam'd ten miles round, and worthy all her fame ;
She lost her Husband when their loves were young,
But kept her farm, her credit, and her tongue :
Full thirty years she rul'd, with matchless skill,
With guiding judgment and resistless will ;
Advice she scorn'd, rebellions she suppress'd,
And sons and servants bow'd at her behest.

Like that great man's, who to his SAVIOUR came,
Were the strong words of this commanding dame ;—
“ Come,” if she said, they came ; if “ go,” were gone ;
And if “ do this,”—that instant it was done :
Her Maidens told she was all eye and ear,
In darkness saw and could at distance hear ;—
No Parish-business in the place could stir,
Without direction or assent from her ;
In turn she took each office as it fell,
Knew all their duties and discharg'd them well ;
The lazy Vagrants in her presence shook,
And pregnant Damsels fear'd her stern rebuke ;
She look'd on want, with judgment clear and cool,
And felt with reason and bestow'd by rule ;
She match'd both sons and daughters to her mind,
And lent them eyes, for Love, she heard, was blind ;
Yet ceaseless still she throve, alert, alive,
The working bee, in full or empty hive ;

Busy and careful, like that working bee,
No time for love nor tender cares had she ;
But when our Farmers made their amorous vows,
She talk'd of market-steeds and patent-ploughs.
Not unemploy'd her evenings pass'd away,
Amusement clos'd, as business wak'd the day ;
When to her toilet's brief concern she ran,
And conversation with her friends began,
Who all were welcome, what they saw, to share ;
And joyous neighbours prais'd her Christmas fare,
That none around might, in their scorn, complain
Of Gossip Goe as greedy in her gain.

Thus long she reign'd, admir'd, if not approv'd ;
Prais'd, if not honour'd ; fear'd, if not belov'd ;—
When, as the busy days of Spring drew near,
That call'd for all the forecast of the year ;
When lively hope the rising crops survey'd,
And April promis'd what September paid :

When stray'd her lambs where *gorse* and *greenweed* grow ;
When rose her *grass* in richer vales below ;
When pleas'd she look'd on all the smiling land,
And view'd the hinds, who wrought at her command ;
(Poultry in groups still follow'd where she went ;) .
Then, dread o'ercame her,—that her days were spent.

“ Bless me ! I die, and not a warning giv'n,—
“ With *much* to do on Earth and ALL for Heav'n !—
“ No reparation for my soul's affairs,
“ No leave petition'd for the barn's repairs :
“ Accounts perplex'd, my interest yet unpaid,
“ My mind unsettled and my will unmade ;—
“ A lawyer haste, and in your way, a priest ;
“ And let me die in one good work at least.”
She spake, and, trembling, dropp'd upon her knees,
Heaven in her eye and in her hand her keys ;
And still the more she found her life decay,
With greater force she grasp'd those signs of sway :



All that now bid us hope, believe, endure,
Our sorrow's comfort and our vice's cure ;
All that for Heaven's high joys the Spirits train,
And Charity, the crown of all, were vain.

Say, will you call the breathless infant blest,
Because no cares the silent grave molest ?
So would you deem the nurseling from the wing
Untimely thrust and never train'd to sing ;
But far more blest the bird whose grateful voice
Sings its own joy and makes the woods rejoice,
Though, while untaught, ere yet he charm'd the ear,
Hard were his trials and his pains severe !

Next died the **LADY** who yon Hall possess'd ;
And here they brought her noble bones to rest.
In Town she dwelt ;—forsaken stood the Hall :
Worms ate the floors, the tap'stry fled the wall :
No fire the Kitchen's cheerless grate display'd ;
No cheerful light the long-clos'd sash convey'd ;

The crawling worm that turns a summer-fly,
Here spun his shroud and laid him up to die
The winter-death:—upon the bed of state,
The bat shrill-shrieking woo'd his flickering mate ;
To empty rooms the curious came no more,
From empty cellars turn'd the angry Poor,
And surly Beggars curs'd the ever-bolted door.
To one small room the Steward found his way,
Where Tenants follow'd to complain and pay ;
Yet no complaint before the *Lady* came,
The feeling Servant spar'd the feeble Dame ;
Who saw her farms with his observing eyes,
And answer'd all requests with his replies :—
She came not down, her falling groves to view ;
Why should she know, what one so faithful knew ?
Why come, from many clamorous tongues to hear,
What one so just might whisper in her ear ?
Her oaks or acres, why with care explore ;
Why learn the wants, the sufferings of the Poor ;

When one so knowing all their worth could trace,
And one so piteous govern'd in her place?

Lo! now, what dismal Sons of Darkness come,
To bear this Daughter of Indulgence home;
Tragedians all, and well arrang'd in black!
Who nature, feeling, force, expression lack;
Who cause no tear, but gloomily pass by,
And shake their sables in the wearied eye,
That turns disgusted from the pompous scene,
Proud without grandeur, with profusion, mean!
The tear for kindness past affection owes;
For worth deceas'd the sigh from reason flows;
E'en well-feign'd passion for our sorrows call,
And real tears for mimic miseries fall:
But this poor farce has neither truth nor art,
To please the fancy or to touch the heart;
Unlike the darkness of the sky, that pours
On the dry ground its fertilizing showers;

Unlike to that which strikes the soul with dread,
When thunders roar and forked fires are shed ;
Dark but not awful, dismal but yet mean,
With anxious bustle moves the cumbrous scene ;
Presents no objects, tender or profound,
But spreads its cold unmeaning gloom around.

When woes are feign'd, how ill such forms appear,
And oh ! how needless, when the woe's sincere.

Slow to the vault they come, with heavy tread,
Bending beneath the *Lady* and her lead ;
A case of elm surrounds that ponderous chest,
Close on that case the crimson velvet's press'd ;
Ungenerous this, that to the worm denies,
With niggard-caution, his appointed prize ;
For now, ere yet he works his tedious way,
Through cloth and wood and metal to his prey,
That prey dissolving shall a mass remain,
That fancy loaths and worms themselves disdain.

But see! the Master-Mourner makes his way,
To end his office for the coffin'd clay ;
Plea'd that our rustic men and maids behold
His plate like silver, and his studs like gold,
As they approach to spell the age, the name,
And all the titles of th' illustrious Dame.—
This as (my duty done) some scholar read,
A Village-Father look'd disdain and said :
“ Away, my friends ! why take such pains to know
“ What some brave marble soon in church shall show ?
“ Where not alone her gracious name shall stand,
“ But how she liv'd—the blessing of the land ;
“ How much we all deplor'd the noble dead,
“ What groans we utter'd and what tears we shed ;
“ Tears, true as those, which in the sleepy eyes
“ Of weeping cherubs on the stone shall rise ;
“ Tears, true as those, which, ere she found her grave,
“ The noble *Lady* to our sorrows gave.”

Down by the Church-way-walk and where the brook
Winds round the chancel like a shepherd's crook ;
In that small house, with those green pales before,
Where jasmine trails on either side the door ;
Where those dark shrubs that now grow wild at will,
Were clipp'd in form and tantaliz'd with skill ;
Where cockles blanch'd and pebbles neatly spread,
Form'd shining borders for the larkspurs' bed ;—
There liv'd a *Lady*, wise, austere, and nice,
Who show'd her virtue by her scorn of vice ;
In the dear fashions of her youth she dress'd,
A pea-green *Joseph* was her favourite vest ;
Erect she stood, she walk'd with stately mien,
Tight was her length of stays, and she was tall and lean.
There long she liv'd in maiden-state immur'd,
From looks of love and treacherous man secur'd ;
Though evil fame—(but that was long before)
Had blown her dubious blast at *Catharine's* door :

A Captain thither, rich from *India* came,
And though a cousin call'd, it touch'd her fame :
Her annual stipend rose from his behest,
And all the long-priz'd treasures she possess'd :—
If aught like joy awhile appear'd to stay
In that stern face, and chase those frowns away ;
'Twas when her treasures she dispos'd for view,
And heard the praises to their splendour due ;
Silks beyond price, so rich, *they'd stand alone*,
And diamonds blazing on the buckled zone ;
Rows of rare pearls by curious workmen set,
And bracelets fair in box of glossy jet ;
Bright polish'd amber precious from its size,
(Or forms, the fairest, fancy could devise :
Her drawers of cedar, shut with secret springs,
Conceal'd the watch of gold and rubied rings ;
Letters, long proofs of love, and verses fine
Round the pink'd rims of crisped Valentine.

Her china-closet, cause of daily care,
For woman's wonder held her pencill'd ware ;
That pictur'd wealth of *China* and *Japan*,
Like its cold Mistress, shunn'd the eye of man.

Her neat small room, adorn'd with maiden-taste,
A clipp'd French-puppy, first of favourites, grac'd :
A parrot next, but dead and stuff'd with art ;
(For Poll, when living, lost the Lady's heart,
And then his life ; for he was heard to speak
Such frightful words as ting'd his Lady's cheek :)
Unhappy bird ! who had no power to prove,
Save by such speech, his gratitude and love.
A grey old cat his whiskers lick'd beside ;
-A type of sadness in the house of pride.
The polish'd surface of an India-chest,
A glassy globe, in frame of ivory, press'd ;
Where swam two finny creatures ; one of gold,
Of silver one ; both beauteous to behold :—

All these were form'd the guiding taste to suit ;
The beasts well-manner'd and the fishes mute.
A widow'd *Aunt* was there, compell'd by need,
The nymph to flatter and her tribe to feed ;
Who, veiling well her scorn, endur'd the clog,
Mute as the fish and fawning as the dog.

As years increas'd, these treasures, her delight,
Arose in value in their owner's sight :
A miser knows that, view it as he will,
A guinea kept is but a guinea still ;
And so he puts it to its proper use,
That something more this guinea may produce :
But silks and rings, in the possessor's eyes,
The oft'ner seen, the more in value rise,
And thus are wisely hoarded to bestow
The kind of pleasure that with years will grow.

But what avail'd their worth,—if worth had they,—
In the sad summer of her slow decay ?

Then we beheld her turn an anxious look
From trunks and chests, and fix it on her book,—
A rich-bound Book of Prayer the Captain gave,
(Some Princess had it, or was said to have) ;
And then once more, on all her stores, look round,
And draw a sigh so piteous and profound,
That told, “ Alas ! how hard from these to part,
“ And for new hopes and habits form the heart !
“ What shall I do, (she cried) my peace of mind
“ To gain in dying, and to die resign’d ?”
‘ Hear,’ we return’d ;—“ these baubles cast aside,
‘ Nor give thy God a rival in thy pride ;
‘ Thy closets shut, and ope thy kitchen’s door ;
‘ *There* own thy failings, *here* invite the Poor ;
‘ A friend of *Mammon* let thy bounty make ;
‘ For Widows’ prayers, thy vanities forsake ;
‘ And let the Hungry, of thy pride, partake :
‘ Then shall thy inward eye with joy survey
‘ The angel *Mercy* tempering *Death*’s delay !’

Alas! 'twas hard ; the treasures still had charms,
Hope still its flattery, sickness its alarms ;
Still was the same unsettled, clouded view,
And the same plaintive cry, " What shall I do ?"

Nor change appear'd : for, when her race was run,
Doubtful we all exclaim'd, " What has been done ?"
Apart she liv'd, and still she lies alone ;
Yon earthy heap awaits the flattering stone,
On which invention shall be long employ'd,
To show the various worth of *Catharine Lloyd*.

Next to these ladies, but in nought allied,
A noble Peasant, *Isaac Ashford*, died.
Noble he was, contemning all things mean,
His truth unquestion'd and his soul serene :
Of no man's presence *Isaac* felt afraid ;
At no man's question *Isaac* look'd dismay'd :
Shame knew him not, he dreaded no disgrace ;
Truth, simple truth, was written in his face ;

et while the serious thought his soul approv'd,
heerful he seem'd, and gentleness he lov'd:
o bliss domestic he his heart resign'd,
nd, with the firmest, had the fondest mind:
ere others joyful, he look'd smiling on,
nd gave allowance where he needed none;
ood he refus'd with future ill to buy,
or knew a joy that caus'd reflection's sigh;
a friend to virtue, his unclouded breast
lo envy stung, no jealousy distress'd;
Bane of the Poor ! it wounds their weaker mind,
o miss one favour, which their neighbours find :)
et far was he from stoic-pride remov'd;
le felt humanely, and he warmly lov'd:
mark'd his action, when his infant died,
nd his old neighbour for offence was tried;
he still tears, stealing down that furrow'd cheek,
poke pity, plainer than the tongue can speak.

If pride were his, 'twas not their vulgar pride,
Who, in their base contempt, the great deride ;
Nor pride in learning,—though my Clerk agreed,
If Fate should call him, *Ashford* might succeed ;
Nor pride in rustic-skill, although we knew
None his superior, and his equals, few :—
But if that spirit in his soul had place,
It was the jealous pride that shuns disgrace ;
A pride in honest fame, by virtue gain'd,
In sturdy boys to virtuous labours train'd ;
Pride, in the power that guards his country's coast,
And all that Englishmen enjoy and boast ;
Pride, in a life that slander's tongue defy'd,—
In fact, a noble passion, misnam'd *Pride*.

He had no party's rage, no sec'try's whim ;
Christian and countryman was *all* with him :
True to his Church he came ; no Sunday-shower
Kept him at home in that important hour ;

Nor his firm feet could one persuading Sect,
By the strong glare of their new light, direct ;
“ On hope, in mine own sober light, I gaze,
“ But should be blind and lose it, in your blaze.”

In times severe, when many a sturdy swain
Felt it his pride, his comfort, to complain ;
Isaac their wants would soothe, his own would hide,
And feel in *that* his comfort and his pride.

At length, he found, when seventy years were run,
His strength departed and his labour done ;
When he, save honest fame, retain'd no more,
But lost his Wife and saw his Children poor :
'Twas then, a spark of—say not discontent—
Struck on his mind, and thus he gave it vent :

“ Kind are your laws, ('tis not to be denied,)
“ That in yon House, for ruin'd Age, provide,
“ And they are just ;—when young, we give you all,
“ And for assistance in our weakness call.—

“ Why then this proud reluctance to be fed,
“ To join your poor, and eat the parish-bread?
“ But yet I linger, loth with him to feed,
“ Who gains his plenty by the sons of need;
“ He who, by contract, all your paupers took,
“ And gauges stomachs with an anxious look :
“ On some old master I could well depend ;
“ See him with joy and thank him as a friend ;
“ But ill on him, who doles the day’s supply,
“ And counts our chances, who at night may die :
“ Yet help me, Heav’n ! and let me not complain
“ Of what I suffer, but my fate sustain.”

Such were his thoughts, and so resign’d he grew ;
Daily he plac’d the Workhouse in his view !
But came not there, for sudden was his fate,
He dropp’d, expiring, at his cottage-gate.

I feel his absence in the hours of Prayer,
And view his seat and sigh for *Isaac* there ;



I see no more those white locks thinly spread
Round the bald polish of that honour'd head ;
No more that awful glance on playful wight,
Compell'd to kneel and tremble at the sight,
To fold his fingers, all in dread the while,
Till Mister *Ashford* soften'd to a smile ;
No more that meek and suppliant look in prayer,
Nor the pure faith (to give it force) are there :—
But he is blest, and I lament no more,
A wise good Man contented to be poor.

Then died a Rambler ; not the one who sails
And trucks, for female favours, beads and nails ;
Not one, who posts from place to place—of men
And manners treating with a flying pen ;
Not he, who climbs, for prospects, *Snowden's* height,
And chides the clouds that intercept the sight ;
No curious shell, rare plant or brilliant spar,
Inticed our traveller, from his home, so far ;

But all the reason, by himself assign'd
For so much rambling, was, a restless mind ;
As on, from place to place, without intent,
Without reflection, *Robin Dingley* went.

Not thus by nature :—never man was found
Less prone to wander from his parish-bound :
Claudian's old Man, to whom all scenes were new,
Save those where he and where his apples grew,
Resembled *Robin*, who around would look,
And his horizon, for the earth's, mistook.

To this poor Swain a keen Attorney came ;—
“ I give thee joy, good fellow ! on thy name ;
“ The rich old *Dingley's* dead ;—no child has he,
“ Nor wife, nor will ; his ALL is left for thee :
“ To be his fortune's heir thy claim is good ;
“ Thou hast the name, and we will prove the blood.”

The claim was made ; 'twas tried,—it would not stand ;
They prov'd the blood, but were refus'd the land.

Assur'd of wealth, this man of simple heart,
To every friend had predispos'd a part :
His Wife had hopes indulg'd of various kind ;
The three Miss *Dingley's* had their school assign'd,
Masters were sought for what they each requir'd,
And books were bought and harpsichords were hir'd :
So high was hope :—the failure touch'd his brain,
And *Robin* never was himself again :
Yet he no wrath, no angry wish express'd,
But tried, in vain, to labour or to rest ;
Then cast his bundle on his back, and went
He knew not whither nor for what intent.

Years fled ;—of *Robin* all remembrance past,
When home he wander'd in his rags at last :
A sailor's jacket on his limbs was thrown,
A sailor's story he had made his own ;
Had suffer'd battles, prisons, tempests, storms,
Encountering death in all his ugliest forms :

His cheeks were haggard, hollow was his eye,
Where madness lurk'd, conceal'd in misery ;
Want, and th' ungentle world, had taught a part,
And prompted cunning to that simple heart :
“ He now bethought him, he would roam no more,
“ But live at home and labour as before.”

Here cloth'd and fed, no sooner he began
To round and redden, than away he ran ;
His Wife was dead, their Children past his aid :
So, unmolested, from his home he stray'd :
Six years elaps'd, when, worn with want and pain,
Came *Robin*, wrapt in all his rags, again :—
We chide, we pity ;—plac'd among our poor,
He fed again, and was a man once more.

As when a gaunt and hungry fox is found,
Entrapp'd alive in some rich hunter's ground ;
Fed for the field, although each day's a feast,
Fatten you may, but never *tame* the beast ;

A house protects him, savoury viands sustain ;
But loose his neck and off he goes again :
So stole our Vagrant from his warm retreat,
To rove a prowler and be deem'd a cheat.

Hard was his fare ; for, him at length we saw,
In cart convey'd and laid supine on straw.
His feeble voice now spoke a sinking heart ;
His groans now told the motions of the cart ;
And when it stopp'd he tried in vain to stand ;
Clos'd was his eye, and clench'd his clammy hand ;
Life ebb'd apace, and our best aid, no more,
Could his weak sense or dying heart restore :
But now he fell, a victim to the snare,
That vile attorneys for the weak prepare ;—
They who, when profit or resentment call,
Heed not the groaning victim they enthrall.

Then died lamented, in the strength of life,
A valued *Mother* and a faithful *Wife*;

Call'd not away, when time had loos'd each hold
On the fond heart, and each desire grew cold;
But when, to all that knit us to our kind,
She felt fast-bound, as charity can bind;—
Not when the ills of age, its pain, its care,
The drooping spirit for its fate prepare;
And, each affection failing, leaves the heart
Loos'd from life's charm and willing to depart;—
But ALL her ties the strong invader broke,
In all their strength, by one tremendous stroke!
Sudden and swift the eager pest came on,
And terror grew, till every hope was gone:
Still those around appear'd for hope to seek!
But view'd the sick and were afraid to speak.—
Slowly they bore, with solemn step, the dead;
When grief grew loud and bitter tears were shed.
My part began; a crowd drew near the place,
Awe in each eye, alarm in every face:

So swift the ill, and of so fierce a kind,
That fear with pity, mingled in each mind;
Friends with the husband came their griefs to blend;
For good-man *Frankford* was to all a friend.
The last-born Boy they held above the bier,
He knew not grief, but cries express'd his fear;
Each different age and sex reveal'd its pain,
In now a louder, now a lower strain;
While the meek Father, listening to their tones,
Swell'd the full cadence of the grief by groans.

The elder Sister strove her pangs to hide,
And soothing words to younger minds applied:
"Be still, be patient," oft she strove to say;
But fail'd as oft, and weeping turn'd away.

Curious and sad, upon the fresh-dug hill,
The village-lads stood melancholy still;
And idle children, wandering to-and-fro,
As Nature guided, took the tone of woe.

Arriv'd at home, how then they gaz'd around,
In ev'ry place,—where she—no more, was found ;—
The seat at table, she was wont to fill ;
The fire-side chair, still set, but vacant still ;
The garden-walks, a labour all her own ;
The lattic'd bower, with trailing shrubs o'ergrown ;
The Sunday-pew, she fill'd with all her race,—
Each place of hers, was now a sacred place,
That, while it call'd up sorrows in the eyes,
Pierc'd the full heart and forc'd them still to rise.

Oh sacred sorrow ! by whom souls are tried,
Sent not to punish mortals, but to guide ;
If thou art mine, (and who shall proudly dare
To tell his MAKER, he has had his share?)
Still let me feel for what thy pangs are sent,
And be my guide and not my punishment !

Of *Leah Cousins* next the name appears,
With honours crown'd and blest with length of years,

Save, that she liv'd to feel, in life's decay,
The pleasure die, the honours drop away;
A Matron she, whom every village-wife
View'd as the help and guardian of her life;
Fathers and sons, indebted to her aid,
Respect to her and her profession paid;
Who in the house of plenty largely fed,
Yet took her station at the pauper's bed;
Nor from that duty could be brib'd again,
While fear or danger urg'd her to remain:
In her experience all her friends relied,
Heaven was her help and nature was her guide.

Thus *Leah* liv'd; long trusted, much caress'd,
Till a Town-Dame a youthful Farmer bless'd;
A gay vain bride, who would example give,
To that poor Village where she deign'd to live;
Some few months past, she sent, in hour of need,
For Doctor *Glibb*, who came with wondrous speed:

Two days he waited, all his art applied,
To save the mother when her infant died :—
“ ’Twas well I came,” at last he deign’d to say ;
“ ’Twas wondrous well ;”—and proudly rode away.

The news ran round ;—“ How vast the Doctor’s

“ pow’r !

“ He sav’d the Lady in the trying hour ;
“ Sav’d her from death, when she was dead to hope,
“ And her fond husband had resign’d her up :
“ So all, like her, may evil fate defy,
“ If Doctor *Glibb*, with saving hand, be nigh.”

Fame (now his friend), fear, novelty, and whim,
And fashion, sent the varying sex to him :
From this, contention in the village rose ;
And *these*, the Dame espous’d ; the Doctor *those* :
The wealthier part, to him and science went ;
With luck and her the poor remain’d content.

The Matron sigh’d ; for she was vex’d at heart,
With so much profit, so much fame, to part :

-
- “ So long successful in my art,” she cried,
“ And this proud man, so young and so untried !”
“ Nay,” said the Doctor, “ dare you trust your wives,
“ The joy, the pride, the solace of your lives,
“ To one who acts and knows no reason why,
“ But trusts, poor hag !, to luck for an ally ?—
“ Who, on experience, can her claims advance,
“ And own the powers of accident and chance ?
“ A whining dame, who prays in danger’s view,
“ (A proof she knows not what beside to do ;)
“ What’s her experience ? In the time that’s gone,
“ Blundering she wrought and still she blunders on :—
“ And what is Nature ? One who acts in aid
“ Of gossips half asleep, and half afraid :
“ With such allies I scorn my fame to blend,
“ Skill is my luck and courage is my friend :
“ No slave to Nature, ’tis my chief delight,
“ To win my way and act in her despite :—

“ Trust then my art, that, in itself complete,

“ Needs no assistance and fears no defeat.”

Warm'd by her well-spiced ale and aiding pipe,
The angry Matron grew for contest ripe.

“ Can you,” she said, “ ungrateful and unjust,

“ Before experience, ostentation trust ?

“ What is your hazard, foolish daughters, tell ?

“ If safe, you're certain ; if secure, you're well :

“ That I have luck must friend and foe confess,

“ And what's good judgment but a lucky guess ?

“ *He* boasts but what he *can* do :—will you run

“ From me, your friend ! who, all *he* boasts, *have* done ?

“ By proud and learned words his powers are known ;

“ By healthy boys and handsome girls my own :

“ Wives ! fathers ! children ! by my help, you live ;

“ Has this pale Doctor more than life to give ?

“ No stunted cripple hops, the Village round ;

“ Your hands are active and your heads are sound ;

-
- “ My lads are all your fields and flocks require :
“ My *lasses* all those sturdy lads admire.
“ Can this proud leech, with all his boasted skill,
“ Amend the soul or body, wit or will ?
“ Does he, for courts the sons of farmers frame,
“ Or make the daughter differ from the dame ?
“ Or, whom he brings into this world of woe,
“ Prepares he them their part to undergo ?
“ If not, this stranger from your doors repel,
“ And be content to *be* and to be *well*.”

She spake; but, ah ! with words too strong and plain ;
Her warmth offended, and her truth was vain :
The *many* left her, and the friendly *few*,
If never colder, yet they older grew ;
Till, unemploy'd, she felt her spirits droop,
And took, insidious aid ! th' inspiring cup ;
Grew poor and peevish as her powers decay'd,
And propp'd the tottering frame with stronger aid,—

Then died !—I saw our careful swains convey,
From this our changeful world, the Matron's clay,
Who to this world, at least, with equal care,
Brought them its changes, good and ill to share.

Now to his grave, was *Roger Cuff* convey'd,
And strong resentment's lingering spirit laid.
Shipwreck'd in youth, he home return'd and found
His Brethren three,—and thrice they wish'd him drown'd.

“ Is this a landman's love ? Be certain then,
“ We part for ever ! ”—and they cried, ‘ Amen ! ’

His words were truth's :—Some forty summers fled,
His brethren died ; his kin suppos'd him dead :
Three nephews these, one sprightly niece, and one,
Less near in blood—they call'd him *surlly John* ;
He work'd in woods apart from all his kind,
Fierce were his looks and moody was his mind.

For home, the *Sailor* now began to sigh ;—
“ The dogs are dead, and I'll return and die ;

“ When all I have, my gains, in years of care,
“ The younger *Cuffs* with kinder souls shall share :—
“ Yet hold ! I’m rich ;—with one consent they’ll say,
“ ‘ You’re welcome, Uncle, as the flowers in May.’
“ No ; I’ll disguise me, be in tatters dress’d,
“ And best befriend the lads who treat me best.”

Now all his kindred,—neither rich nor poor,
Kept the wolf want some distance from the door.

In piteous plight he knock’d at *George’s* gate,
And begg’d for aid, as he describ’d his state :—
But stern was *George* :—‘ Let them who had thee strong,
‘ Help thee to drag thy weaken’d frame along ;
‘ To us a stranger, while your limbs would move,
‘ From us depart and try a stranger’s love :’—
‘ Ha ! do’st thou murmur ?’—for, in *Roger’s* throat,
Was “ *Rascal !* ” rising with disdainful note.

To pious *James* he then his prayer address’d ;—
‘ Good-lack,’ quoth *James*, ‘ thy sorrows pierce my
‘ breast ;

‘ And, had I wealth, as have my brethren twain,
‘ One board should feed us and one roof contain :
‘ But plead I will thy cause and I will pray :
‘ And so farewell ! Heaven help thee on thy way !’

“ Scoundrel !” said *Roger*, (but apart) ;—and told
His case to *Peter* ;—*Peter* too was cold : —

‘ The rates are high ; we have a-many poor ;
‘ But I will think,——’ he said, and shut the door.

Then the gay *Niece*, the seeming pauper press’d ;—
“ Turn, *Nancy*, turn, and view this form distrest :
“ Akin to thine is this declining frame,
“ And this poor beggar claims an *Uncle*’s name.”
‘ Avaunt ! begone ! (the courteous maiden said,)

‘ Thou vile impostor ! Uncle *Roger*’s dead :
‘ I hate thee, beast ; thy look, my spirit shocks !
Oh ! that I saw thee starving in the stocks !’

“ My gentle niece !” he said ;—and sought the wood.—
“ I hunger, fellow ; prithee, give me food !”

‘ Give ! am I rich ? This hatchet take and try
‘ Thy proper strength, nor give those limbs the lie ;
‘ Work, feed thyself, to thine own powers appeal,
‘ Nor whine out woes, thine own right-hand can heal :
‘ And while that hand is thine and thine a leg,
‘ Scorn, of the proud or of the base to beg.”

“ Come, surly *John*, thy wealthy kinsman view,”
(Old *Roger* said) :—“ thy words are brave and true ;
“ Come, live with me: we’ll vex those scoundrel-boys,
“ And that prim Shrew shall, envying, hear our joys.—
“ Tobacco’s glorious fume, all day we’ll share,
“ With beef and brandy kill all kinds of care ;
“ We’ll beer and biscuit on our table heap,
“ And rail at rascals, till we fall asleep.”

Such was their life : but when the Woodman died,
His grieving kin for *Roger*’s smiles applied—
In vain ; he shut, with stern rebuke, the door,
And dying, built a refuge for the poor ;

With this restriction, That no *Cuff* should share
One meal or shelter for one moment there.

My Record ends:—But hark ! e'en now I hear
The bell of death, and know not whose to fear :
Our farmers all, and all our hinds were well ;
In no man's cottage, danger seem'd to dwell :—
Yet death of man proclaim these heavy chimes,
For thrice they sound, with pausing space, three times.

“ Go ; of my Sexton seek, Whose days are sped ?—

“ What ! he, himself !—and is old *Dibble* dead ?”

His eightieth year he reach'd, still undecay'd,
And rectors five to one close vault convey'd:—

But he is gone ; his care and skill I lose,

And gain a mournful subject for my Muse :

His masters lost, he'd oft in turn deplore,

And kindly add,—‘ Heaven grant, I lose no more !’

Yet while he spake, a sly and pleasant glance

Appear'd at variance with his complaisance :

For, as he told their fate and varying worth,
He archly look'd,—‘ I yet may bear thee forth.’
“ When first”—(he so began)—“ my trade I ply’d,
“ Good master *Addle* was the parish-guide ;
“ His clerk and sexton, I beheld with fear,
“ His stride majestic and his frown severe ;
“ A noble pillar of the church he stood,
“ Adorn’d with college-gown and parish-hood ;
“ Then, as he pac’d the hallow’d aisles about,
“ He fill’d the sevenfold surplice fairly out !
“ But in his pulpit wearied down with prayer,
“ He sat and seem’d as in his study’s chair ;
“ For while the anthem swell’d and when it ceas’d,
“ Th’ expecting people view’d their slumbering priest :—
“ Who, dozing, died.—Our Parson *Peele* was next ;
“ ‘ I will not spare you,’ was his favourite text ;
“ Nor did he spare, but rais’d them many a pound ;
“ Ev’n me he mulet for my poor rood of ground ;

- “ Yet car’d he nought, but with a gibing speech,
“ ‘ What should I do,’ quoth he, ‘ but what *I* preach?’
“ His piercing jokes (and he’d a plenteous store)
“ Were daily offer’d both to rich and poor;
“ His scorn, his love, in playful words he spoke;
“ His pity, praise, and promise, were a joke;
“ But though so young and blest with spirits high,
“ He died as grave as any judge could die:
“ The strong attack subdu’d his lively powers,—
“ His was the grave, and Doctor *Grandspear* ours.
“ Then were there golden times the village round;
“ In his abundance all appear’d t’ abound;
“ Liberal and rich, a plenteous board he spread,
“ E’en cool Dissenters at his table fed;
“ Who wish’d, and hop’d,—and thought a man so kind,
“ A way to Heaven, though not their own, might find;
“ To them, to all, he was polite and free,
“ Kind to the poor, and, ah! most kind to me:—

-
- “ ‘ *Ralph,*’ would he say, ‘ *Ralph Dibble,* thou art old’;
“ ‘ That doublet fit, ’twill keep thee from the cold:
“ ‘ How does my Sexton ?—What ! the times are hard ;
“ ‘ Drive that stout pig and pen him in thy yard.’
“ But most, his Reverence lov’d a mirthful jest :—
“ ‘ Thy coat is thin ; why, man thou’rt *barely* drest ;
“ ‘ It’s worn to the th’ thread ! but I have nappy beer ;
“ ‘ Clap that within and see how they will wear.’
“ Gay days were these ; but they were quickly past :
“ When first he came, we found he cou’dn’t last :
“ A whoreson cough (and at the fall of leaf)
“ Upset him quite :—but what’s the gain of grief ?
“ Then came the *Author-Rector* ; his delight
“ Was all in books ; to read them, or to write :
“ Women and men, he strove alike to shun,
“ And hurried homeward, when his tasks were done :
“ Courteous enough, but careless what he said,
“ For points of learning he reserv’d his head ;

- “ And when addressing either poor or rich,
“ He knew no better than his cassock which :
“ He, like an osier, was of pliant kind,
“ Erect by nature, but to bend inclin’d ;
“ Not like a creeper falling to the ground,
“ Or meanly catching on the neighbours round :—
“ Careless was he of surplice, hood, and band,—
“ And kindly took them as they came to hand :
“ Nor, like the doctor, wore a world of hat,
“ As if he sought for dignity in that :
“ He talk’d, he gave, but not with cautious rules :
“ Nor turn’d from gypsies, vagabonds, or fools ;
“ It was his nature, but they thought it whim,
“ And so our beaux and beauties turn’d from him :
“ Of questions, much he wrote, profound and dark,—
“ How spake the Serpent, and where stopp’d the Ark ;
“ From what far land the Queen of Sheba came ;
“ Who Salem’s Priest, and what his father’s name ;

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- “ He made the Song of Songs its mysteries yield,
“ And Revelations, to the world, reveal’d.
“ He sleeps i’ the aisle,—but not a stone records
“ His name or fame, his actions or his words :
“ And truth, your Reverence, when I look around,
“ And mark the tombs in our sepulchral ground,
“ (Though dare I not of one man’s hope to doubt,)
“ I’d join the party who repose without.
“ Next came a *Youth* from *Cambridge*, and, in truth,
“ He was a sober and a comely youth ;
“ He blush’d in meekness as a modest man,
“ And gain’d attention ere his task began :
“ When preaching, seldom ventur’d on reproof,
“ But touch’d his neighbours tenderly enough.
“ Him, in his youth, a clamorous sect assail’d,
“ Advis’d and censur’d, flatter’d,—and prevail’d.—
“ Then did he much his sober hearers vex,
“ Confound the simple and the sad perplex ;

- “ To a new style his Reverence rashly took :
- “ Loud grew his voice, to threat’ning swell’d his look;
- “ Above, below, on either side, he gaz’d,
- “ Amazing all, and most himself amaz’d :
- “ No more he read his preachments pure and plain,
- “ But launch’d outright and rose and sank again:
- “ At times he smil’d in scorn, at times he wept,
- “ And such sad coil with words of vengeance kept,
- “ That our best sleepers started as they slept.
- “ ‘ Conviction comes like lightning,’ he would cry;
- “ ‘ In vain you seek it and in vain you fly ;
- “ ‘ ’Tis like the rushing of the mighty wind,
- “ ‘ Unseen its progress, but its power you find ;
- “ ‘ It strikes the child ere yet its reason wakes ;
- “ ‘ His reason fled, the antient sire it shakes;
- “ ‘ The proud, learn’d man, and him who loves to know
- “ ‘ How and from whence these gusts of grace will blow,
- “ ‘ It shuns,—but sinners in their way impedes,
- “ ‘ And sots and harlots visits in their deeds ;

-
- “ ‘ Of faith and penance it supplies the place ;
“ ‘ Assures the vilest that they live by grace,
“ ‘ And, without running, makes them win the race.’
“ Such was the doctrine our young prophet taught ;
“ And here conviction, there confusion wrought ;
“ When his thin cheek assum’d a deadly hue,
“ And all the rose to one small spot withdrew :
“ They call’d it hectic ; ’twas a fiery flush,
“ More fix’d and deeper than the maiden blush ;
“ His paler lips the pearly teeth disclos’d,
“ And lab’ring lungs the length’ning speech oppos’d.
“ No more his span-girth shanks and quiv’ring thighs
“ Upheld a body of the smaller size ;
“ But down he sank upon his dying-bed,
“ And gloomy crotchets fill’d his wandering head.—
“ ‘ Spite of my faith, all-saving faith,’ he cried,
“ ‘ I fear of worldly works the wicked pride ;
“ ‘ Poor as I am, degraded, abject, blind,
“ ‘ The good I’ve wrought still rankles in my mind ;

" ' My alms-deeds all and every deed I've done,
 " ' My moral-rags defile me every one;
 " ' It should not be :—what say'st thou ? tell me Ralph.'
 " Quoth I, ' Your Reverence, I believe, you're safe;
 " ' Your faith's your prop, nor have you pass'd such
 " ' time

" ' In life's good-works as swell them to a crime.
 " ' If I of pardon for my sins were sure,
 " ' About my goodness I would rest secure.'
 " Such was his end ; and mine approaches fast ;
 " I've seen my best of preachers,—and my last."—

He bow'd, and archly smil'd at what he said,
 Civil but sly :—' And is old *Dibble* dead ?'

Yes! he is gone: and we are going all;
 Like flowers we wither and like leaves we fall ;—
 Here, with an infant, joyful sponsors come,
 'Then bear the new-made Christian to its home;
 A few short years and we behold him stand,
 To ask a blessing, with his Bride in hand:

A few, still seeming shorter, and we hear
His widow weeping at her husband's bier:—
Thus, as the months succeed, shall infants take
Their names ; thus parents shall the child forsake ;
Thus brides again and bridegrooms blithe shall kneel,
By love or law compell'd their vows to seal,
Ere I again, or one like me, explore
These simple Annals of the VILLAGE POOR.



THE
LIBRARY:

A Poem.

ARGUMENT.

Books afford Consolation to the troubled Mind, by substituting a lighter kind of Distress for its own.—They are productive of other Advantages:—An Author's hope of being known in distant Times.—Arrangement of the Library.—Size and Form of the Volumes.—The antient Folio, clasped and chained.—Fashion prevalent even in this place.—The mode of publishing in Numbers, Pamphlets, &c. Subjects of the different Classes.—Divinity.—Controversy.—The Friends of Religion often more dangerous than her Foes.—Sceptical Authors.—Reason too much rejected by the former Converts; exclusively relied upon by the latter.—Philosophy ascending through the Scale of Being to Moral Subjects.—Books of Medicine: their Variety, Variance, and proneness to System: The Evil of this, and the Difficulty it causes:—Farewell to this Study.—Law:—The increasing number of its Volumes.—Supposed happy State of Man without Laws.—Progress of Society.—Historians: their Subjects.—Dramatic Authors, Tragic and Comic.—Antient Romances.—The Captive Heroine.—Happiness in the perusal of such books: why.—Criticism.—Apprehensions of the Author: Removed by the Appearance of the Genius of the Place; whose Reasoning and Admonition conclude the Subject.

THE
LIBRARY:

WHEN the sad soul, by care and grief oppress'd
Looks round the world, but looks in vain, for rest ;
When every object that appears in view,
Partakes her gloom and seems dejected too ;
Where shall affliction from itself retire ?
Where fade away and placidly expire ?
Alas ! we fly to silent scenes in vain,
Care blasts the honours of the flow'ry plain :
Care veils in clouds the sun's meridian beam,
Sighs through the grove and murmurs in the stream ;
For when the soul is labouring in despair,
In vain the body breathes a purer air :

No storm-tost sailor sighs for slumbering seas,—
He dreads the tempest, but invokes the breeze ;
On the smooth mirror of the deep resides
Reflected woe, and o'er unruffled tides
The ghost of every former danger glides.
Thus, in the calms of life, we only see
A steadler image of our misery ;
But lively gales and gently-clouded skies,
Disperse the sad reflections as they rise ;
And busy thoughts and little cares avail
To ease the mind, when rest and reason fail.
When the dull thought, by no designs employ'd,
Dwells on the past, or suffer'd or enjoy'd,
We bleed anew in every former grief,
And joys departed furnish no relief.

Not Hope herself, with all her flattering art,
Can cure this stubborn sickness of the heart :
The soul disdains each comfort she prepares,
And anxious searches for congenial cares ;

Those lenient cares, which, with our own combin'd,
By mixt sensations ease th' afflicted mind,
And steal our grief away and leave their own behind ;
A lighter grief ! which feeling hearts endure
Without regret, nor e'en demand a cure.

But what strange art, what magic can dispose
The troubled mind to change its native woes ?
Or lead us willing from ourselves, to see
Others more wretched, more undone than we ?
This, books can do ;—nor this alone ; they give
New views to life and teach us how to live ;
They soothe the griev'd, the stubborn they chastise,
Fools they admonish, and confirm the wise :
Their aid they yield to all : they never shun
The man of sorrow nor the wretch undone :
Unlike the hard, the selfish, and the proud,
They fly not sullen from the suppliant crowd ;
Nor tell to various people various things,
But show to subjects, what they show to kings.

Come, Child of Care ! to make thy soul serene,
Approach the treasures of this tranquil scene ;
Survey the dome, and, as the doors unfold,
The soul's best cure, in all her cares, behold !
Where mental wealth the poor in thought may find,
And mental physic the diseases'd in mind ;
See here the balms that passion's wounds assuage ;
See coolers here, that damp the fire of rage ;
Here alt'ratives, by slow degrees controul
The chronic habits of the sickly soul ;
And round the heart and o'er the aching head,
Mild opiates here their sober influence shed.
Now bid thy soul man's busy scenes exclude,
And view compos'd this silent multitude :—
Silent they are, but, though depriv'd of sound,
Here all the living languages abound ;
Here all that live no more; preserv'd they lie,
In tombs that open to the curious eye.

Blest be the gracious Power, who taught mankind
To stamp a lasting image of the mind !—
Beasts may convey, and tuneful birds may sing,
Their mutual feelings, in the opening spring ;
But man alone has skill and power to send
The heart's warm dictates to the distant friend :
'Tis his alone to please, instruct, advise
Ages remote and nations yet to rise.

In sweet repose, when labour's children sleep,
When joy forgets to smile and care to weep,
When passion slumbers in the lover's breast,
And fear and guilt partake the balm of rest,
Why then denies the studious man to share
Man's common good, who feels his common care ?

Because the hope is his, that bids him fly
Night's soft repose and sleep's mild power defy ;
That after-ages may repeat his praise,
And fame's fair meed be his, for length of days.

Delightful prospect ! when we leave behind,
A worthy offspring of the fruitful mind !
Which, born and nurs'd through many an anxious day,
Shall all our labour, all our cares repay.

Yet all are not these births of noble kind,
Not all the children of a vigorous mind ;
But where the wisest should alone preside,
The weak would rule us and the blind would guide ;
Nay, man's best efforts taste of man, and show
The poor and troubled source from which they flow :
Where most he triumphs, we his wants perceive,
And for his weakness in his wisdom grieve.
But though imperfect all ; yet wisdom loves
This seat serene, and virtue's self approves :—
Here come the griev'd, a change of thought to find ;
The curious here, to feed a craving mind ;
Here the devout their peaceful temple choose ;
And here the poet meets his favouring muse.

With awe, around these silent walks I tread;

These are the lasting mansions of the dead:—

‘The dead,’ methinks a thousand tongues reply;

‘These are the tombs of such as cannot die!

‘Crown’d with eternal fame, they sit sublime,

‘And laugh at all the little strife of time.’

Hail, then, immortals! ye who shine above,

Each, in his sphere, the literary Jove;

And ye the common people of these skies,

A humbler crowd of nameless deities;

Whether ’tis yours to lead the willing mind

Through history’s mazes, and the turnings find;

Or whether, led by science, ye retire,

Lost and bewilder’d in the vast desire;

Whether the Muse invites you to her bowers,

And crowns your placid brows with living flowers;

Or godlike wisdom teaches you to show

The noblest road to happiness below;

Or men and manners prompt the easy page
To mark the flying follies of the age:
Whatever good ye boast, that good impart ;
Inform the head and rectify the heart.

Lo ! all in silence, all in order stand,
And mighty folios first, a lordly band ;
'Then quartos their well-order'd ranks maintain,
And light octavos fill a spacious plain :
See yonder, rang'd in more frequented rows,
A humbler band of duodecimos ;
While undistinguish'd trifles swell the scene,
'The last new play and fritter'd magazine.
Thus 'tis in life, where first the proud, the great,
In leagued assembly keep their cumbrous state ;
Heavy and huge, they fill the world with dread,
Are much admir'd and are but little read :
'The commons next, a middle rank are found ;
Professions fruitful pour their offspring round ;

Reasoners and wits are next their place allow'd,
And last, of vulgar tribes, a countless crowd.

First, let us view the form, the size, the dress ;
For, these the manners, nay the mind express ;
That weight of wood, with leathern coat o'erlaid ;
Those ample clasps, of solid metal made ;
The close-press'd leaves, unclos'd for many an age ;
The dull red edging of the well-fill'd page ;
On the broad back the stubborn ridges roll'd,
Where yet the title stands in tarnish'd gold :
These all a sage and labour'd work proclaim,
A painful candidate for lasting fame :
No idle wit, no trifling verse can lurk
In the deep bosom of that weighty work ;
No playful thoughts degrade the solemn style,
Nor one light sentence claims a transient smile.

Hence, in these times, untouch'd the pages lie,
And slumber out their immortality ;

They *had* their day, when, after all his toil,
His morning study, and his midnight oil,
At length an author's *ONE* great work appear'd,
By patient hope, and length of days, endear'd:
Expecting nations hail'd it from the press;
Poetic friends prefix'd each kind address;
Princes and kings receiv'd the pond'rous gift,
And ladies read the work, they could not lift.
Fashion, though folly's child, and guide of fools,
Rules e'en the wisest, and in learning rules;
From crowds and courts to wisdom's seat she goes,
And reigns triumphant o'er her mother's foes.

For lo! these fav'rites of the antient mode
Lie all neglected like the *Birth-day Ode*;
Ah! needless now this weight of massy chain *;
Safe in themselves, the once-lov'd works remain;

* In the more antient libraries, works of value and importance were fastened to their places by a length of chain; and might so be perused, but not taken away.

No readers now invade their still retreat,
None try to steal them from their parent-seat ;
Like antient beauties, they may now discard
Chains, bolts, and locks, and lie without a guard.
Our patient fathers trifling themes laid by,
And roll'd, o'er labour'd works, th' attentive eye ;
Page after page, the much-enduring men
Explor'd, the deeps and shallows of the pen ;
Till, every former note and comment known,
They mark'd the spacious margin with their own :
Minute corrections prov'd their studious care ;
The little index, pointing, told us where ;
And many an emendation show'd, the age
Look'd far beyond the rubric title-page.

Our nicer palates lighter labours seek,
Cloy'd with a folio-*Number* once a week ;
Bibles, with cuts and comments, thus go down ;
E'en light Voltaire is *number'd* through the town :

Thus physic flies abroad, and thus the law,
From men of study and from men of straw ;
Abstracts, abridgements, please the fickle times,
Pamphlets and plays and politics and rhymes:
But though, to write be now a task of ease,
The task is hard by many arts to please,
When all our weakness is expos'd to view,
And half our judges are our rivals too.

Amid these works, on which the eager eye
Delights to fix, or glides reluctant by,
When all combin'd, their decent pomp display,
Where shall we first our early off'ring pay ?—

To thee, DIVINITY ! to thee, the light
And guide of mortals, through their mental night ;
By whom we learn, our hopes and fears to guide ;
To bear with pain and to contend with pride ;

When griev'd, to pray ; when injur'd, to forgive ;
And with the world in charity to live.

Not truths like these inspir'd that numerous race,
Whose pious labours fill this ample space ;
But questions nice, where doubt on doubt arose,
Awak'd to war the long-contending foes.
For dubious meanings, learn'd polemics strove,
And wars on faith prevented works of love ;
The brands of discord far around were hurl'd,
And holy wrath inflam'd a sinful world :—
Dull though impatient, peevish though devout,
With wit disgusting and despis'd without ;
Saints in design, in execution, men,
Peace in their looks and vengeance in their pen.

Methinks I see, and sicken at the sight,
Spirits of spleen from yonder pile alight ;
Spirits who prompted every damning page,
With pontiff pride and still-increasing rage :

Lo! how they stretch their gloomy wings around,
And lash with furious strokes the trembling ground!
They pray, they fight, they murder, and they weep,—
Wolves in their vengeance, in their manners sheep;
Too well they act the prophet's fatal part,
Denouncing evil with a zealous heart;
And each, like Jonas, is displeas'd if God
Repent his anger, or withhold his rod.

But here, the dormant fury rests unsought,
And zeal sleeps soundly by the foes she fought;
Here all the rage of controversy ends,
And rival zealots rest like bosom-friends;
An Athanasian here, in deep repose,
Sleeps with the fiercest of his Arian foes;
Socinians here with Calvinists abide,
And thin partitions angry chiefs divide;
Here wily Jesuits simple Quakers meet,
And *Bellarmino* has rest at *Luther's* feet.

Great authors for the Church's glory fir'd,
Are, for the Church's peace, to rest retir'd;
~~And close beside, a mystic, mandlin race,~~
Lie, "Crumbs of Comfort, for the Babes of Grace."

Against her foes, religion well defends
Her sacred truths, but often fears her friends;
If learn'd, their pride, if weak, their zeal she dreads,
And their hearts' weakness, who have soundest heads:
But most she fears the controversial pen,
The holy strife of disputations men;
Who the blest Gospel's peaceful page explore,
Only to fight against its precepts more.

Near to these seats, behold yon slender frames,
All closely fill'd and mark'd with modern names;
Where no fair science ever shows her face,
Few sparks of genius and no spark of grace;
There sceptics rest, a still-increasing throng,
And stretch their widening wings ten-thousand strong:

Some in close fight their dubious claims maintain ;
Some skirmish lightly, fly and fight again ;
Coldly profane and impiously gay,
Their end the same, though various in their way.

When first Religion came to bless the land,
Her friends were then a firm believing band ;
To doubt was, then, to plunge in guilt extreme,
And all was gospel that a monk could dream ;
Insulted reason fled the grov'ling soul,
For fear to guide and visions to control :
But now, when reason has assum'd her throne,
She, in her turn, demands to reign alone ;
Rejecting all that lies beyond her view,
And, being judge, will be a witness too :
Insulted faith then leaves the doubtful mind,
To seek for truth, without a power to find :
Ah ! when will both in friendly beams unite,
And pour on erring man resistless light ?

Next to the seats, well stor'd with works divine,
An ample space, PHILOSOPHY! is thine;
Our reason's guide, by whose assisting light
We trace the moral bounds of wrong and right;
Our guide through nature, from the sterile clay,
To the bright orbs of yon celestial way!
'Tis thine, the great, the golden chain to trace,
Which runs through all, connecting race with race;
Save where those puzzling, stubborn links remain,
Which thy inferior light pursues in vain:—

How vice and virtue in the soul contend;
How widely differ, yet how nearly blend!
What various passions war on either part,
And now confirm, now melt the yielding heart:
How fancy loves around the world to stray,
While judgment slowly picks his sober way;
The stores of memory and the flights sublime
Of genius, bound by neither space nor time;—

Without the miseries of the poor, we know
What wisdom, wealth, and poverty bestow ;
We see how reason calms the raging mind,
And how contending passions urge mankind :
Some, won by virtue, glow with sacred fire ;
Some, lured by vice, indulge the low desire ;
Whilst others, won by either, now pursue
The guilty chace, now keep the good in view ;
For ever wretched, with themselves at strife,
They lead a puzzled, vexed, uncertain life ;
For, transient vice bequeaths a lingering pain,
Which transient virtue seeks to cure in vain.

Whilst thus engag'd, high views enlarge the soul,
New interests draw, new principles control ;
Nor thus the soul alone resigns her grief,
But here the tortur'd body finds relief ;
For see where yonder sage Arachnè shapes
Her subtile gin, that not a fly escapes !

There **PHYSIC** fills the space, and far around,
File above pile, her learned works abound ;
Glorious their aim—to ease the labouring heart ;
To war with death and stop his flying dart ;
To trace the source whence the fierce contest grew,
And life's short lease on easier terms renew ;
To calm the frenzy of the burning brain ;
To heal the tortures of imploring pain ;
Or, when more powerful ills all efforts brave,
To ease the victim no device can save,
And smooth the stormy passage to the grave.

But man, who knows no good unmix'd and pure,
Oft finds a poison where he sought a cure ;
For, grave deceivers lodge their labours here,
And cloud the science they pretend to clear :
Scourges for sin, the solemn tribe are sent ;
Like fire and storms, they call us to repent ;
But storms subside, and fires forget to rage,
These are eternal scourges of the age :

'Tis not enough that each terrific hand
Spreads desolation round a guilty land ;
But, train'd to ill, and harden'd by its crimes,
Their pen relentless kills through future times.

Say ye, who search these records of the dead,
Who read huge works, to boast what ye have read ;
Can all the real knowledge ye possess,
Or those (if such there are) who more than guess,
Atone for each impostor's wild mistakes,
And mend the blunders pride or folly makes ?

What thought so wild, what airy dream so light,
That will not prompt a theorist to write ?
What art so prevalent, what proof so strong,
That will convince him his attempt is wrong ?
One in the solids finds each lurking ill,
Nor grants the passive fluids power to kill ;
A learned friend some subtler reason brings,
Absolves the channels, but condemns their springs ;

The subtile nerves, that shun the doctor's eye,
Escape no more his subtler theory ;
The vital heat, that warms the labouring heart,
Lends a fair system to these sons of art ;
The vital air, a pure and subtile stream,
Serves a foundation for an airy scheme,
Assists the doctor, and supports his dream.
Some have their favourite ills, and each disease
Is but a younger branch that kills from these :
One to the gout contracts all human pain,
He views it raging in the frantic brain ;
Finds it in fevers all his efforts mar,
And sees it lurking in the cold catarrh :
Bilious by some, by others nervous seen,
Rage the fantastic dæmons of the spleen ;
And every symptom of the strange disease
With every system of the sage agrees.

Ye frigid tribe, on whom I wasted long
The tedious hours and ne'er indulg'd in song ;

Ye first seducers of my easy heart,
Who promis'd knowledge, ye could not impart ;
Ye dull deluders, truth's destructive foes ;
Ye sons of fiction, clad in stupid prose ;
Ye treacherous leaders, who, yourselves in doubt,
Light up false fires and send us far about ;—
Still may yon spider round your pages spin,
Subtile and slow, her emblematic gin !
Buried in dust and lost in silence, dwell,
Most potent, grave, and reverend friends—farewell !

Near these, and where the setting sun displays,
Through the dim window, his departing rays,
And gilds yon columns, there, on either side,
The huge abridgments of the Law abide ;
Fruitful as vice the dread correctors stand,
And spread their guardian terrors round the land ;
Yet, as the best that human care can do,
Is mixt with error, oft with evil too,

Skill'd in deceit, and practis'd to evade,
Knaves stand secure, for whom these laws were made :
And justice vainly each expedient tries,
While art eludes it, or while power defies.
“ Ah! happy age,” the youthful poet sings,
“ When the free nations knew not laws nor kings ;
When all were blest to share a common store,
And none were proud of wealth, for none were poor ;
No wars, nor tumults vex'd each still domain,
No thirst of empire, no desire of gain ;
No proud great man, nor one who would be great,
Drove modest merit from its proper state :
Nor into distant climes would avarice roam,
To fetch delights for luxury at home.
Bound by no ties which kept the soul in awe,
They dwelt at liberty, and love was law !”

“ Mistaken youth ! each nation first was rude,
Each man a cheerless son of solitude,

To whom no joys of social life were known,
None felt a care that was not all his own ;
Or in some languid clime his abject soul
Bow'd to a little tyrant's stern control ;
A slave, with slaves his monarch's throne he rais'd,
And in rude song his ruder idol prais'd ;
The meaner cares of life were all he knew,
Bounded his pleasures, and his wishes few :
But when by slow degrees the arts arose,
And science waken'd from her long repose ;
When commerce, rising from the bed of ease,
Ran round the land and pointed to the seas ;
When emulation, born with jealous eye,
And avarice, lent their spurs to industry ;
Then one by one the numerous laws were made,
Those to control, and these to succour trade ;
To curb the insolence of rude command,
To snatch the victim from the usurer's hand ;

'To awe the bold, to yield the wrong'd redress,
And feed the poor with luxury's excess."

Like some vast flood, unbounded, fierce, and strong,
His nature leads ungovern'd man along ;
Like mighty bulwarks made to stem that tide,
The laws are form'd and plac'd on ev'ry side :
Whene'er it breaks the bounds by these decreed,
New statutes rise, and stronger laws succeed ;
More and more gentle grows the dying stream,
More and more strong the rising bulwarks seem ;
Till, like a miner working sure and slow,
Luxury creeps on, and ruins all below ;
The basis sinks, the ample piles decay ;
The stately fabric shakes and falls away ;
Primæval want and ignorance come on,
But freedom, that exalts the savage state, is gone.

Next, HISTORY ranks ;—there full in front she lies.
And every nation her dread tale supplies ;

Yet history has her doubts, and every age
With sceptic queries marks the passing page ;
Records of old nor later date are clear,
Too distant those, and these are plac'd too near ;
There time conceals the objects from our view,
Here our own passions and a writer's too :
Yet, in these volumes, see how states arose !
Guarded by virtue from surrounding foes ;
Their virtue lost, and of their triumphs vain,
Lo ! how they sunk to slavery again !
Sate with power, of fame and wealth possest,
A nation grows too glorious to be blest ;
Conspicuous made, she stands the mark of all,
And foes join foes to triumph in her fall.

Thus speaks the page that paints ambition's race,
The monarch's pride, his glory, his disgrace ;
The headlong course, that madd'ning heroes run,
How soon triumphant, and how soon undone ;

How slaves, 'turn'd tyrants, offer crowns to sale,
And each fall'n nation's melancholy tale.

Lo ! where of late the Book of Martyrs stood,
Old pious tracts, and Bibles bound in wood ;
There, such the taste of our degenerate age,
Stand the profane delusions of the STAGE :
Yet virtue owns the TRAGIC MUSE a friend,
Fable her means, morality her end ;
For this she rules all passions in their turns,
And now the bosom bleeds, and now it burns ;
Pity with weeping eye surveys her bowl,
Her anger swells, her terror chills the soul ;
She makes the vile to virtue yield applause,
And own her sceptre while they break her laws ;
For ~~vice~~ in others is abhorr'd of all,
And villains triumph when the worthless fall.

Not thus her sister COMEDY prevails,
Who shoots at folly, for her arrow fails ;
Folly, by dulness arm'd, eludes the wound,
And harmless sees the feather'd shafts rebound ;
Unhurt she stands, applauds the archer's skill,
Laughs at her malice, and is folly still.
Yet well the muse pourtrays in fancied scenes,
What pride will stoop to, what profession means ;
How formal fools the farce of state applaud ;
How caution watches at the lips of fraud ;
The wordy variance of domestic life ;
The tyrant husband, the retorting wife ;
The snares for innocence, the lie of trade,
And the smooth tongue's habitual masquerade.

With her the virtues too obtain a place,
Each gentle passion, each becoming grace ;
The social joy in life's securer road,
Its easy pleasure, its substantial good ;

The happy thought that conscious virtue gives,
And all that ought to live, and all that lives.

But who are these ? Methinks a noble mien
And awful grandeur in their form are seen,
Now in disgrace : what though by time is spread
Polluting dust o'er every reverend head ;
What though beneath yon gilded tribe they lie,
And dull observers pass insulting by :
Forbid it shame, forbid it decent awe,
What seems so grave, should no attention draw !
Come, let us then with reverend step advance,
And greet—the ancient worthies of ROMANCE.

Hence, ye profane ! I feel a former dread,
A thousand visions float around my head :
Hark ! hollow blasts through empty courts resound,
And shadowy forms with staring eyes stalk round ;
See ! moats and bridges, walls and castles rise,
Ghosts, fairies, dæmons, dance before our eyes ;

Lo! magic verse inscrib'd on golden gate,
And bloody hand that beckons on to fate ;—
“ And who art thou, thou little page, unfold ?
“ Say, doth thy lord my *Claribel* withhold ?
“ Go tell him straight, Sir Knight, thou must resign
“ The captive queen;—for *Claribel* is mine.”
Away he flies ; and now for bloody deeds,
Black suits of armour, masks, and foaming steeds ;
The giant falls ; his recreant throat I seize,
And from his corslet take the massy keys :—
Dukes, lords and knights in long procession move,
Releas'd from bondage with my virgin love :—
She comes ! she comes ! in all the charms of youth,
Unequal'd love and unsuspected truth !
Ah ! happy he who thus, in magic themes,
O'er worlds bewitch'd, in early rapture dreams,
Where wild enchantment waves her potent wand,
And fancy's beauties fill her fairy land ;

Where doubtful objects strange desires excite,
And fear and ignorance afford delight.

But lost, for ever lost, to me these joys,
Which reason scatters and which time destroys,
Too dearly bought : maturer judgment calls
My busied mind from tales and madrigals ;
My doughty giants all are slain or fled,
And all my knights, blue, green, and yellow, dead !
No more the midnight fairy tribe I view,
All in the merry moonshine tippling dew ;
E'en the last lingering fiction of the brain,
The church-yard ghost, is now at rest again ;
And all these wayward wanderings of my youth,
Fly reason's power and shun the light of truth.

With fiction then does real joy reside,
And is our reason the delusive guide ?
Is it then right to dream the syrens sing ?
Or mount enraptur'd on the dragon's wing ?

No, 'tis the infant mind, to care unknown,
That makes th' imagin'd paradise its own ;
Soon as reflections in the bosom rise,
Light slumbers vanish from the clouded eyes :
The tear and smile, that once together rose,
Are then divorc'd ; the head and heart are foes ;
Enchantment bows to wisdom's serious plan,
And pain and prudence make and mar the man.

While thus, of power and fancied empire vain,
With various thoughts my mind I entertain ;
While books my slaves, with tyrant hand I seize,
Pleas'd with the pride that will not let them please ;
Sudden I find terrific thoughts arise,
And sympathetic sorrow fills my eyes ;
For, lo ! while yet my heart admits the wound,
I see the CRITIC army rang'd around.

Foes to our race ! if ever ye have known
A father's fears for offspring of your own ;—

If ever, smiling o'er a lucky line,
Ye thought the sudden sentiment divine,
Then paus'd and doubted, and then, tir'd of doubt,
With rage as sudden dash'd the stanza out;—
If, after fearing much and pausing long,
Ye ventur'd on the world your labour'd song,
And from the crusty critics of those days,
Implor'd the feeble tribute of their praise;
Remember now, the fears that mov'd you then,
And, spite of truth, let mercy guide your pen.

What vent'rous race are ours! what mighty foes
Lie waiting all around them to oppose!
What treacherous friends betray them to the fight!
What dangers threaten them!—yet still they write:
A hapless tribe! to every evil born,
Whom villains hate and fools affect to scorn:
Strangers they come, amid a world of woe,
And taste the largest portion ere they go.

Pensive I spoke, and cast mine eyes around ;
The roof, methought, return'd a solemn sound ;
Each column seem'd to shake, and clouds, like smoke,
From dusty piles and ancient volumes broke ;
Gathering above, like mists condens'd they seem,
Exhal'd in Summer from the rushy stream ;
Like flowing robes they now appear, and twine
Round the large members of a form divine ;
His silver beard, that swept his aged breast,
His piercing eye, that inward light express'd,
Were seen,—but clouds and darkness veil'd the rest.
Fear chill'd my heart: to one of mortal race,
How awful seem'd the Genius of the place !
So in Ciminerian shores, Ulysses saw
His parent-shade, and shrunk in pious awe ;
Like him I stood, and wrapt in thought profound,
When from the pitying power broke forth a solemn
sound:—

“ Care lives with all ; no rules, no precepts save
The wise from woe, no fortitude the brave ;
Grief is to man as certain as the grave :
Tempests and storms in life’s whole progress rise,
And hope shines dimly through o’erclouded skies ;
Some drops of comfort on the favour’d fall,
But showers of sorrow are the lot of *all* :
Partial to talents, then, shall Heav’n withdraw
Th’ afflicting rod, or break the general law ?
Shall he who soars, inspir’d by loftier views,
Life’s little cares and little pains refuse ?
Shall he not rather feel a double share
Of mortal woe, when doubly arm’d to bear ?

“ Hard is his fate who builds his peace of mind
On the precarious mercy of mankind ;
Who hopes for wild and visionary things,
And mounts o’er unknown seas with vent’rous wings :
But as, of various evils that befall
The human race, some portion goes to all ;

To him perhaps the milder lot 's assign'd,
Who feels his consolation in his mind ;
And, lock'd within his bosom, bears about
A mental charm for every care without.
E'en in the pangs of each domestic grief,
Or health or vigorous hope affords relief ;
And every wound the tortur'd bosom feels,
Or virtue bears, or some preserver heals ;
Some generous friend, or ample power possess ;
Some feeling heart, that bleeds for the distress ;
Some breast that glows with virtues all divine ;
Some noble RUTLAND, Misery's friend and thine.

“ Nor say, the Muse's song, the Poet's pen,
Merit the scorn they meet from little men.
With cautious freedom if the numbers flow,
Not wildly high, not pitifully low ;
If vice alone their honest aims oppose,
Why so ashamed their friends, so loud their foes ?

Happy for men in every age and clime,
If all the sons of vision dealt in rhyme.
Go on then, Son of Vision! still pursue
The airy dreams; the world is dreaming too.
Ambition's lofty views, the pomp of state,
The pride of wealth, the splendour of the great,
Stript of their mask, their cares and troubles known,
Are visions far less happy than thy own:
Go on! and, while the sons of care complain,
Be wisely gay and innocently vain;
While serious souls are by their fears undone,
Blow sportive bladders in the beamy sun,
And call them worlds! and bid the greatest show
More radiant colours in their worlds below:
Then, as they break, the slaves of care reprove,
And tell them, Such are all the toys they love."



THE
NEWSPAPER:

A Poem.

ARGUMENT.

This not a Time favourable to Poetical Composition: and why.—Newspapers enemies to Literature, and their general Influence:—their Numbers.—The Sunday Monitor.—Their general Character.—Their effect upon Individuals;—upon Society,—in the Country.—The Village-Freeholder.—What kind of Composition a Newspaper is; and the Amusement it affords.—Of what Parts it is chiefly composed.—Articles of Intelligence:—Advertisements:—The Stage:—Quacks:—Puffing.—The Correspondents to a Newspaper, Political and Poetical:—Advice to the latter.—Conclusion.

THE
NEWSPAPER.

È quibus, hi vacuas implent sermonibus aures,
Hi narrata ferunt aliò; mensuræque ficti
Crescit, et auditis aliquid novus adjicit auctor:
Illic credulitas, illic temerarius error,
Vanæque lætitia est, consternatique timores,
Seditiôque repens, dubiôque auctore susurri.

Ovid. Metamorph. Lib. xii.

A TIME like this, a busy, bustling time,
Suits ill with writers, very ill with rhyme:
Unheard we sing, when party-rage runs strong,
And mightier madness checks the flowing song:
Or, should we force the peaceful Muse to wield
Her feeble arms amid the furious field,

Where party-pens a wordy war maintain,
Poor is her anger and her friendship vain ;
And oft the foes who feel her sting, combine,
Till serious vengeance pays an idle line ;
For party-poets are like wasps, who dart
Death to themselves and to their foes but smart.

Hard then our fate : if general themes we choose,
Neglect awaits the song, and chills the Muse ;
Or should we sing the subject of the day,
To-morrow's wonder puffs our praise away.
More blest the bards of that poetic time,
When all found readers who could find a rhyme ;
Green grew the bays on every teeming head,
And *Cibber* was enthron'd and *Settle* read.
Sing, drooping Muse, the cause of thy decline ;
Why reign no more the once-triumphant Nine †
Alas ! new charms the wavering many gain,
And rival sheets the reader's eye detain ;

A daily swarm, that banish every Muse,
Come flying forth, and mortals call them News :
For these, unread, the noblest volumes lie ;
For these, in sheets unsoil'd, the Muses die ;
Unbought, unblest, the virgin copies wait
In vain for fame, and sink, unseen, to fate.

Since, then, the town forsakes us for our foes,
The smoothest numbers for the harshest prose ;
Let us, with generous scorn, the taste deride,
And sing our rivals with a rival's pride.

Ye gentle poets, who so oft complain
That foul neglect is all your labours gain ;
That pity only checks your growing spite
To erring man, and prompts you still to write ;
That your choice works on humble stalls are laid,
Or vainly grace the windows of the trade ;
Be ye my friends, if friendship e'er can warm
Those rival bosoms whom the Muses charm :



THE NEWSPAPER.

Think of the common cause, wherein we go,
Like gallant Greeks against the Trojan foe ;
Nor let one peevish chief his leader blame,
Till, crown'd with conquest, we regain our fame;
And let us join our forces to subdue
This bold assuming but successful crew.

I sing of NEWS, and all those vapid sheets
The rattling hawker vends through gaping streets ;
Whate'er their name, whate'er the time they fly,
Damp from the press, to charm the reader's eye :
For, soon as morning dawns with roseate hue,
The HERALD of the morn arises too ;
POST after POST succeeds, and, all day long,
GAZETTES and LEDGERS swarm, a noisy throng.
When evening comes, she comes with all her train
Of LEDGERS, CHRONICLES, and POSTS again,

Like bats, appearing, when the sun goes down,
From holes obscure and corners of the town.
Of all these triflers, all like these, I write;
Oh ! like my subject could my song delight,
The crowd at *Lloyd's* one poet's name should raise,
And all the *Alley* echo to his praise.

In shoals the hours their constant numbers bring,
Like insects waking to th' advancing spring;
Which take their rise from grubs obscene that lie
In shallow pools, or thence ascend the sky :
Such are these base ephemeras, so born
To die before the next revolving morn.

Yet thus they differ : insect-tribes are lost
In the first visit of a winter's frost ;
While these remain, a base but constant breed,
Whose swarming sons their short-liv'd sires succeed ;
No changing season makes their number less,
Nor Sunday shines a Sabbath on the press ! !

Then lo! the sainted MONITOR is born,
Whose pious face some sacred texts adorn :
As artful sinners cloak the secret sin,
To veil with seeming grace the guile within ;
So Moral Essays on his front appear,
But all is carnal business in the rear ;
The fresh-coin'd lie, the secret whisper'd last,
And all the gleanings of the six days past,
With these retir'd, through half the Sabbath-day,
The London-lounger yawns his hours away :
Not so, my little flock !, your preacher fly,
Nor waste the time no wordly wealth can buy ;
But let the decent maid and sober clown
Pray for these idlers of the sinful town :
This day, at least, on nobler themes bestow,
Nor give to *Woodfall*, or the world below.

But, Sunday past, what numbers flourish then,
What wond'rous labours of the press and pen !

Diurnal most, some thrice each week affords,
Some only once,—O avarice of words !
When thousand starving minds such manna seek*,
To drop the precious food but once a week.

Endless it were to sing the powers of all,
Their names, their numbers ; how they rise and fall ;
Like baneful herbs the gazer's eye they seize,
Rush to the head and poison where they please :
Like idle flies, a busy, buzzing train,
They drop their maggots in the trifler's brain :
That genial soil receives the fruitful store,
And there they grow, and breed a thousand more.

Now be their arts display'd, how first they choose
A cause and party, as the bard his muse ;
Inspir'd by these, with clamorous zeal they cry,
And through the town their dreams and omens fly :

* The Manna of the Day. Green's Spleen.

So the Sibylline * leaves were blown about,
Disjointed scraps of fate involv'd in doubt ;
So idle dreams, the journals of the night,
Are right and wrong by turns, and mingle wrong with
right.—

Some champions for the rights that prop the crown,
Some sturdy patriots, sworn to pull them down ;
Some neutral powers, with secret forces fraught,
Wishing for war, but willing to be bought ;
While some to every side and party go,
Shift every friend and join with every foe ;
Like sturdy rogues in privateers they strike
This side and that, the foes of both alike ;
A traitor-crew, who thrive in troubled times,
Fear'd for their force and courted for their crimes.

* - - - in foliis descripsit carmina Virgo ;—

- - - et teneres turbavit janua frondes.

Virg. *Æneid.* lib. iii.

Chief to the prosperous side the numbers sail,
Fickle and false, they veer with every gale ;
As birds that migrate from a freezing shore,
In search of warmer climes, come skimming o'er,
Some bold adventurers first prepare to try
The doubtful sunshine of the distant sky ;
But soon the growing Summer's certain sun
Wins more and more, till all at last are won :
So, on the early prospect of disgrace,
Fly in vast troops this apprehensive race ;
Instinctive tribes ! their failing food they dread,
And buy, with timely change, their future bread.

Such are our guides ; how many a peaceful head,
Born to be still, have they to wrangling led !
How many an honest zealot, stol'n from trade,
And factious tools of pious pastors made !
With clews like these they tread the maze of state,
These oracles explore, to learn our fate ;

Pleas'd with the guides who can so well deceive,
Who cannot lie so fast as they believe.

Oft lend I, loth, to some sage friend an ear,
(For we who will not speak are doom'd to hear);
While he, bewilder'd, tells his anxious thought,
Infectious fear from tainted scribblers caught,
Or idiot hope; for each his mind assails,
As LLOYD's court-light or STOCKDALE's gloom prevails
Yet stand I patient while but one declaims,
Or gives dull comments on the speech he maims;
But oh! ye Muses, keep your votary's feet
From tavern-haunts where politicians meet;
Where rector, doctor, and attorney pause,
First on each parish, then each public cause:
Indited roads and rates that still increase;
The murmuring poor, who will not fast in peace;
Election-zeal and friendship, since declin'd;
A tax commuted, or a tithe in kind;

The Dutch and Germans kindling into strife ;
Dull port and poachers vile ! the serious ills of life.

Here comes the neighbouring justice, pleas'd to guide
His little club and in the chair preside.
In private business his commands prevail,
On public themes his reasoning turns the scale ;
Assenting silence soothes his happy ear,
And, in or out, his party triumphs here.

Nor here th' infectious rage for party stops,
But flits along from palaces to shops ;
Our weekly journals o'er the land abound,
And spread their plagues and influenzas round ;
The village too, the peaceful, pleasant plain,
Breeds the Whig-farmer and the Tory-swain ;
Brookes' and St. Alban's boasts not, but, instead,
Stares the Red Ram, and swings the *Rodney's* Head :—
Hither, with all a patriot's care, comes he
Who owns the little hut that makes him free ;

Whose yearly forty shillings buy the smile
Of mightier men, and never waste the while ;
Who feels his freehold's worth, and looks elate,
A little prop and pillar of the state.

Here he delights the weekly news to con,
And mingle comments as he blunders on ;
'To swallow all their varying authors teach,
'To spell a title and confound a speech :
Till with a muddled mind he quits the news,
And claims his nation's licence to abuse ;
Then joins the cry, " That all the courtly race
" Are venal candidates for power and place ;"
Yet feels some joy, amid the general vice,
That his own vote will bring its wonted price.

These are the ills the teeming press supplies,
The pois'nous springs from learning's fountain rise ;
Not there the wise alone their entrance find,
Imparting useful light to mortals blind ;

But, blind themselves, these erring guides hold out
Alluring lights, to lead us far about ;
Screen'd by such means, here scandal whets her quill,
Here slander shoots unseen, whene'er she will ;
Here fraud and falsehood labour to deceive,
And folly aids them both, impatient to believe.

Such, Sons of BRITAIN !, are the guides ye trust ;
So wise their counsel, their reports so just :—
Yet, though we cannot call their morals pure,
Their judgment nice, or their decisions sure ;
Merit they have to mightier works unknown,
A style, a manner, and a fate their own.



We, who for longer fame with labour strive,
Are pain'd to keep our sickly works alive ;
Studious we toil, with patient care refine,
Nor let our love protect one languid line.
Severe ourselves, at last our works appear,
When, ah ! we find our readers more severe :

For after all our care and pains, how few
Acquire applause, or keep it if they do!—

Not so these sheets, ordain'd to happier fate,
Prais'd through their day, and but that day their date;
Their careless authors only strive to join
As many words as make an even line*;
As many lines, as fill a row complete;
As many rows, as furnish up a sheet:
From side to side, with ready types they run,
The measure's ended, and the work is done;
Oh, born with ease, how envy'd and how blest!
Your fate to-day and your to-morrow's rest.
To you all readers turn, and they can look
Pleas'd on a paper, who abhor a book;

* How many hours bring about the day,
How many days will furnish up the year,
How many years a mortal man may live; &c.
Shakespear's Henry VI.

Those, who ne'er deign'd their Bible to peruse,
Would think it hard to be deny'd their news;
Sinners and saints, the wisest with the weak,
Here mingle tastes and one amusement seek;
This, like the public inn, provides a treat,
Where each promiscuous guest sits down to eat;
And such this mental food, as we may call.
Something to all men and to some men all.

Next, in what rare production shall we trace
Such various subjects in so small a space?
As the first ship upon the waters bore
Incongruous kinds who never met before;
Or as some curious virtuoso joins,
In one small room, moths, minerals, and coins,
Birds, beasts, and fishes; nor refuses place
To serpents, toads, and all the reptile-race;
So here, compress'd within a single sheet,
Great things and small, the mean and mighty meet:

'Tis this which makes all Europe's business known,
Yet here a private man may place his own ;
And, where he reads of Lords and Commons, he
May tell their honours that he sells rappee.

Add next th' amusement which the motley page
Affords to either sex and every age :

Lo ! where it comes before the cheerful fire,—

Damps from the press in smoky curls aspire

(As from the earth the sun exhales the dew),

Ere we can read the wonders that ensue :

Then eager every eye surveys the part,

That brings its favourite subject to the heart ;

Grave politicians look for facts alone,

And gravely add conjectures of their own :

The sprightly nymph, who never broke her rest

For tottering crowns, or mighty lands oppress,

Finds broils and battles, but neglects them all

For songs and suits, a birth-day, or a ball :

The keen warm man o'erlooks each idle tale
For "Money's wanted," and "Estates on Sale ;"
While some with equal minds to all attend,
Pleas'd with each part and griev'd to find an end.

So charm the News ; but we, who, far from town,
Wait till the post-man brings the packet down,
Once in the week, a vacant day behold,
And stay for tidings, till they 're three days old :
That day arrives ; no welcome post appears,
But the dull morn a sullen aspect wears ;
We meet, but ah ! without our wonted smile,
To talk of head-aches, and complain of bile ;
Sullen we ponder o'er a dull repast,
Nor feast the body while the mind must fast.

A master-passion is the love of news,
Not music so commands, nor so the Muse :
Give poets claret, they grow idle soon ;
Feed the musician, and he 's out of tune ;

But the sick mind, of this disease possess,
Flies from all cure and sickens when at rest.

Now sing, my Muse, what various parts compose
These rival sheets of politics and prose.

First, from each brother's board a part they draw,
A mutual theft that never fear'd a law ;
Whate'er they gain, to each man's portion fall,
And read it once, you read it through them all :
For this their runners ramble day and night,
To drag each lurking deed to open light ;
For daily bread the dirty trade they ply,
Coin their fresh tales and live upon the lie :
Like bees for honey, forth for news they spring,—
Industrious creatures! ever on the wing ;
Home to their several cells they bear the store,
Cull'd of all kinds, then roam abroad for more.

No anxious virgin flies to "fair Tweed-side;"
No injur'd husband mourns his faithless bride;
No duel dooms the fiery youth to bleed;
But through the town transpires each vent'rous deed.

Should some fair frail-one drive her prancing pair,
Where rival peers contend to please the fair;
When, with new force, she aids her conquering eyes,
And beauty decks, with all that beauty buys;
Quickly we learn whose heart her influence feels,
Whose acres melt, before her glowing wheels.

To these a thousand idle themes succeed,
Deeds of all kinds and comments to each deed.
Here stocks, the state-barometers, we view,
That rise or fall, by causes known to few;
Promotion's ladder who goes up or down;
Who wed, or who seduc'd, amuse the town;
What new-born heir has made his father blest;
What heir exults, his father now at rest;

That ample list the Tyburn-herald gives,
And each known knave, who still for Tyburn lives.

So grows the work, and now the printer tries
His powers no more, but leans on his allies.

When lo ! the advertising tribe succeed,
Pay to be read, yet find but few will read ;
And chief th' illustrious race, whose drops and pills
Have patent powers to vanquish human ills :
These, with their cures, a constant aid remain,
To bless the pale composer's fertile brain ;
Fertile it is, but still the noblest soil
Requires some pause, some intervals from toil ;
And they at least a certain ease obtain
From *Katterfelto's* skill, and *Graham's* glowing strain.

I too must aid, and pay to see my name
Hung in these dirty avenues to fame ;

Nor pay in vain, if aught the Muse has seen,
And sung, could make those avenues more clean ;
Could stop one slander ere it found its way,
And gave to public scorn its helpless prey.
By the same aid, the stage invites her friends,
And kindly tells the banquet she intends ;
Thither from real life the many run,
With SIDDONS weep, or laugh with ABINGDON ;
Pleas'd in fictitious joy or grief, to see
The mimic passion with their own agree ;
To steal a few enchanted hours away
From care, and drop the curtain on the day.

But who can steal from self that wretched wight,
Whose darling work is tried, some fatal night ?
Most wretched man ! when, bane to every bliss,
He hears the serpent-critic's rising hiss ;
Then groans succeed : nor traitors on the wheel
Can feel like him, or have such pangs to feel.

Nor end they here: next day he reads his fall,
In every paper; critics are they all;
He sees his branded name, with wild affright,
And hears again the cat-calls of the night.

Such help the **STAGE** affords: a larger space
Is fill'd by **PUFFS** and all the puffing race.
Physic had once alone the lofty style,
The well-known boast, that ceas'd to raise a smile:
Now all the province of that tribe invade,
And we abound in quacks of every trade.

The simple barber, once an honest name,
CERVANTES founded, **FIELDING** rais'd his fame:
Barber no more—a gay perfumer comes,
On whose soft cheek his own cosmetic blooms;
Here he appears, each simple mind to move,
And advertises beauty, grace, and love.

—“ Come, faded belles, who would your youth renew,
And learn the wonders of Olympian dew ;
Restore the roses that begin to faint,
Nor think celestial washes, vulgar paint ;
Your former features, airs, and arts assume,
Circassian virtues, with Circassian bloom.

—Come, batter’d beaux, whose locks are turn’d to gray,
And crop discretion’s lying badge away ;
Read where they vend these smart engaging things,
These flaxen frontlets with elastic springs ;
No female eye the fair deception sees,
Not Nature’s self so natural as these.”

Such are their arts, but, not confin’d to them,
The Muse impartial must her sons condemn :
For they, degenerate ! join the venal throng,
And puff a lazy Pegasus along :
More guilty these, by Nature less design’d
For little arts that suit the vulgar-kind ;—

That barbers' boys, who would to trade advance,
Wish us to call them, smart friseurs from France;
That he who builds a chop-house, on his door
Paints "The true original Blue Boar!"

These are the arts by which a thousand live,
Where truth may smile and justice may forgive:
But when, amid this rabble-rout, we find
A puffing poet to his honour blind;
Who silly drops quotations all about,
Packet or Post, and points their merit out;
Who advertises what Reviewers say,
With sham editions every second day;
Who dares not trust his praises out of sight,
But hurries into fame with all his might;
Although the verse some transient praise obtains,
Contempt is all the anxious poet gains.

Now puffs exhausted, advertisements past,
Their correspondents stand expos'd at last;

These are a numerous tribe, to fame unknown,
Who for the public good forego their own ;
Who volunteers in paper-war engage,
With double portion of their party's rage :
Such are the BRUTI, DECHI, who appear
Wooing the printer for admission here ;
Whose generous souls can condescend to pray
For leave to throw their precious time away.

Oh ! cruel WOODFALL ! when a patriot draws
His grey-goose quill in his dear country's cause,
To vex and maul a ministerial race,
Can thy stern soul refuse the champion place ?
Alas ! thou know'st not with what anxious heart
He longs his best-lov'd labours to impart ;
How he has sent them to thy brethren round,
And still the same unkind reception found :
At length indignant will he damn the state,
Turn to his trade and leave us to our fate.

These Roman souls, like Rome's great sons, are known
To live in cells on labours of their own.
Thus MILO, could we see the noble chief,
Feeds, for his country's good, on legs of beef :
CAMILLUS copies deeds for sordid pay,
Yet fights the public battles twice a day :
E'en now the godlike BRUTUS views his score
Scroll'd on the bar-board, swinging with the door ;
Where, tippling punch, grave CATO's self you'll see,
And *Amor Patriæ* vending smuggled tea.

Last in these ranks, and least, their art's disgrace,
Neglected stand the Muses' meanest race ;
Scribblers who court contempt, whose verse the eye
Disdainful views, and glances swiftly by :
This Poet's corner is the place they choose,
A fatal nursery for an infant Muse ;
Unlike that corner where true Poets lie,
These cannot live, and they shall never die ;

Hapless the lad whose mind such dreams invade,
And win to verse the talents due to trade.

Curb then, O youth! these raptures as they rise,
Keep down the evil spirit and be wise;
Follow your calling, think the Muses foes,
Nor lean upon the pestle and compose.

I know your day-dreams, and I know the snare
Hid in your flow'ry path, and cry "Beware."

Thoughtless of ill, and to the future blind,
A sudden couplet rushes in your mind;
Here you may nameless print your idle rhymes,
And read your first-born work a thousand times;
Th' infection spreads, your couplet grows apace,
Stanzas to Delia's dog or Celia's face:
You take a name; Philander's odes are seen,
Printed, and prais'd, in every magazine:

Diarian sages greet their brother sage,
And your dark pages please th' enlighten'd age.—
Alas! what years you thus consume in vain,
Rul'd by this wretched bias of the brain !

Go! to your desks and counters all return !
Your Sonnets scatter, your Acrostics burn ;
Trade, and be rich ; or, should your careful sires
Bequeath you wealth! indulge the nobler fires :
Should love of fame your youthful heart betray,
Pursue fair fame, but in a glorious way,
Nor in the idle scenes of fancy's painting stray.

Of all the good that mortal men pursue,
The Muse has least to give, and gives to few ;
Like some coquettish fair, she leads us on,
With smiles and hopes, till youth and peace are gone ;
Then, wed for life, the restless wrangling pair
Forget how constant one, and one how fair :

Meanwhile, ambition, like a blooming bride,
Brings power and wealth to grace her lover's side ;
And though she smiles not with such flattering charms,
The brave will sooner win her to their arms.

Then wed to her, if virtue tie the bands,
Go spread your country's fame in hostile lands ;
Her court, her senate, or her arms adorn,
And let her foes lament that you were born :
Or weigh her laws, their ancient rights defend,
Though hosts oppose, be theirs and reason's friend ;
Arm'd with strong powers, in their defence engage,
And rise the THURLOW of the future age.



THE
BIRTH OF FLATTERY.

ARGUMENT.

The Subject:—Poverty and Canning described:—When united, a jarring Couple.—Mutual Reproof.—The Wife consoled by a Dream.—Birth of a Daughter.—Description and Prediction of Envy:—How to be rendered ineffectual, explained in a Vision.—Simulation fortells the future Success and Triumphs of Flattery.—Her Power over various Characters and different Minds;—over certain Classes of Men;—over Envy himself.—Her successful Art of softening the Evils of Life;—of changing Characters;—of meliorating Prospects, and affixing Value to Possessions, Pictures, &c.—Conclusion.

THE
BIRTH OF FLATTERY.

Omnia habeo, nec quicquam habeo ;
Quidquid dicunt, laudo ; id rursum si negant, laudo id quoque :
Negat quis, nego ; ait, aio :
Postremò imperavi egomet mihi
Omnia assentari. Terent. in Eunuch.

It has been held in antient rules,
That flattery is the food of fools ;
Yet now and then your men of wit
Will condescend to taste a bit. Swift.

MUSE of my *Spenser*, who so well could sing,
The passions all, their bearings and their ties ;
Who could in view those shadowy beings bring,
And with bold hand remove each dark disguise,
Wherein love, hatred, scorn, or anger lies :

Guide him to *Fairy-land*, who now intends
That way his flight; assist him as he flies,
To mark those passions, virtue's foes and friends,
By whom when led she droops, when leading she ascends

Yes! they appear, I see the fairy-train!!

And who that modest nymph of meek address?
Not *Vanity*, though lov'd by all the vain;
Not *Hope*, though promising to all success;
Nor *Mirth*, nor *Joy*, though foe to all distress;
There, sprightly syren, from this train I choose,
Thy birth relate, thy soothing arts confess;
'Tis not in thy mild nature to refuse,
When poets ask thine aid, so oft their meed and muse



In *Fairy-land*, on wide and cheerless plain,
Dwelt, in the house of *Care*, a sturdy swain;
A hireling he, who, when he till'd the soil,
Look'd to the pittance that repay'd his toil;

And to a master left the mingled joy,
And anxious care that follow'd his employ :
Sullen and patient he at once appear'd,
As one who murmur'd, yet as one who fear'd ;
Th' attire was coarse that cloth'd his sinewy frame,
Rude his address, and *Poverty* his name.

In that same plain a nymph, of curious taste,
A cottage (plann'd with all her skill) had plac'd ;
Strange the materials, and for what design'd
The various parts, no simple man might find ;
What seem'd the door, each entering guest withstood,
What seem'd a window was but painted wood ;
But by a secret spring the wall would move,
And day-light drop through glassy door above :
'Twas all her pride, new traps for praise to lay,
And all her wisdom was to hide her way ;
In small attempts incessant were her pains,
And *Cunning* was her name among the swains.

Now, whether fate decreed this pair should wed,
And blindly drove them to the marriage-bed ;
Or whether love in some soft hour inclin'd
The damsel's heart and won her to be kind,
Is yet unsung : they were an ill-match'd pair,
But both dispos'd to wed—and wed they were.

Yet, though united in their fortune, still
Their ways were diverse; varying was their will ;
Nor long the maid had blest the simple man,
Before dissensions rose and she began :—

“ Wretch that I am ! since, to thy fortune bound,
“ What plan, what project with success is crown'd ?
“ I, who a thousand secret arts possess,
“ Who every rank approach with right address ;
“ Who've loos'd a guinea from a miser's chest,
“ And worm'd his secret from a traitor's breast ;

“ Thence gifts and gains collecting, great and small,
“ Have brought to thee, and thou consum’st them all :
“ For want like thine—a bog without a base—
“ Ingulphs all gains I gather for the place ;
“ Feeding, unfill’d ; destroying, undestroy’d ; -
“ It craves for ever and is ever void :—
“ Wretch that I am ! what misery have I found,
“ Since my sure craft was to thy calling bound ?”

‘ Oh ! vaunt of worthless art,’ the swain replied,
Scowling contempt, ‘ how pitiful this pride !
‘ What are these specious gifts, these paltry gains,
‘ But base rewards for ignominious pains ?
‘ With all thy tricking, still for bread we strive,
‘ Thine is, proud wretch ! the care that cannot thrive ;
‘ By all thy boasted skill and baffled hooks,
‘ Thou gain’st no more than students by their books ;
‘ No more than I for my poor deeds am paid,
‘ Whom none can blame, will help, or dare upbraid.

-
- Call this our need, a bog that all devours,—
 - Then what thy petty arts, but summer-flowers,
 - Gaudy and mean, and serving to betray
 - The place they make unprofitably gay ?
 - Who know it not, some useless beauties see,—
 - But ah ! to prove it was reserv'd for me.'

Unhappy state ! that, in decay of love,
Permits harsh truth his errors to disprove ;
While he remains, to wrangle and to jar,
Is friendly tournament, not fatal war ;
Love in his play will borrow arms of hate,
Anger and rage, upbraiding and debate ;
And by his power the desperate weapons thrown,
Become as safe and pleasant as his own ;
But left by him, their natures they assume,
And fatal, in their poisoning force, become.

Time fled, and now the swain compell'd to see
New cause for fear—' Is this thy thrift ?' quoth he :

To whom the wife with cheerful voice replied:—

- “ Thou moody man, lay all thy fears aside,
“ I’ve seen a vision;—they, from whom I came,
“ A daughter promise, promise wealth and fame;
“ Born with my features, with my arts, yet she
“ Shall patient, pliant, persevering be,
“ And in thy better ways resemble thee.
“ The fairies round shall at her birth attend,
“ The friend of all in all shall find a friend,
“ And save that one sad star that hour must gleam
“ On our fair child, how glorious were my dream!”

This heard the husband, and, in surly smile,
Aim’d at contempt, but yet he hop’d the while:
For as, when sinking, wretched men are found
To catch at rushes rather than be drown’d;
So on a dream our peasant plac’d his hope,
And found that rush as valid as a rope.

Swift fled the days, for now in hope they fled,
When a fair daughter bless'd the nuptial bed;
Her infant-face the mother's pains beguil'd,
She look'd so pleasing and so softly smil'd;
Those smiles, those looks, with sweet sensations mov'd
The gazer's soul, and, as he look'd, he lov'd.

And now the fairies came, with gifts, to grace
So mild a nature and so fair a face.

They gave, with beauty, that bewitching art,
That holds in easy chains the human heart;
They gave her skill to win the stubborn mind,
To make the suffering to their sorrows blind,
To bring on pensive looks the pleasing smile,
And care's stern brow of every frown beguile.

These magic favours grac'd the infant-maid,
Whose more enlivening smile the charming gifts repaid.

Now fortune chang'd, who, were she constant long,
Would leave us few adventures for our song.

A wicked elfin rov'd this land around,
Whose joys proceeded from the griefs he found ;
Envy his name :—his fascinating eye,
From the light bosom drew the sudden sigh ;
Unsocial he, but with malignant mind,
He dwelt with man, that he might curse mankind ;
Like the first foe he sought th' abode of joy,
Griev'd to behold but eager to destroy ;
Round blooming beauty, like the wasp, he flew, .
Soil'd the fresh sweet and chang'd the rosy hue ;
The wise, the good, with anxious heart, he saw,
And here a failing found and there a flaw ;
Discord in families 'twas his to move,
Distrust in friendship, jealousy in love ;
He told the poor, what Joys the great possess'd,
The great—what calm content the cottage bless'd ;

To part the learned and the rich he tried,
Till their slow friendship perish'd in their pride.
Such was the fiend, and so secure of prey,
That only misery pass'd unstung away.

Soon as he heard the fairy-babe was born,
Scornful he smil'd, but felt no more than scorn ;
For why, when fortune plac'd her state so low,
In useless spite his lofty malice show ?
Why, in a mischief of the meaner kind,
Exhaust the vigour of a ranc'rous mind ?
But, soon as fame the fairy-gifts proclaim'd,
Quick-rising wrath his ready soul inflam'd,
To swear, by vows that e'en the wicked tie,
The nymph should weep her varied destiny ;
That every gift, that now appear'd to shine
In her fair face and make her smiles divine,
Should all the poison of his magic prove,
And they should scorn her, whom she sought for love.

His spell prepar'd, in form an antient dame,
A fiend in spirit, to the cot he came ;
'There gain'd admittance, and the infant press'd
(Muttering his wicked magic) to his breast ;
And thus he said :—" Of all the powers, who wait
" On *Jove's* decrees and do the work of fate,
" Was I alone, despis'd or worthless, found,
" Weak to protect or impotent to wound ?
" See then thy foe, regret the friendship lost,
" And learn my skill, but learn it at your cost.
" Know then, O child ! devote to fates severe,
" The good shall hate thy name, the wise shall fear ;
" Wit shall deride, and no protecting friend
" Thy shame shall cover or thy name defend.
" Thy gentle sex, who, more than ours, should spare
" A humble foe, will greater scorn declare ;
" The base alone thy advocates shall be,
" Or boast alliance with a wretch like thee."

He spake and vanish'd, other prey to find,
And waste in slow disease the conquer'd mind.

Aw'd by the Elfin's threats, and fill'd with dread,
The parents wept and sought their infant's bed :
Despair alone the father's soul possess'd ;
But hope rose gently in the mother's breast ;
For well she knew that neither grief nor joy
Pain'd without hope or pleas'd without alloy ;
And while these hopes and fears her heart divide,
A cheerful vision bade the fears subside.

She saw descending to the world below,
An antient form, with solemn pace and slow.

“ Daughter, no more be sad,” (the Phantom cried,)
“ Success is seldom to the wise denied ;
“ In idle wishes fools supinely stay,
“ Be there a will and wisdom finds a way :

-
- “ Why art thou griev’d? Be rather glad, that he,
“ Who hates the happy, aims his darts at thee;
“ But aims in vain; thy favour’d daughter lies,
“ Serenely blest, and shall to joy arise.
“ For, grant that curses on her name shall wait,
“ (So envy wills and such the voice of fate,)
“ Yet if that name be prudently suppress’d,
“ She shall be courted, favour’d, and caress’d.
“ For what are names? and where agree mankind,
“ In those to persons or to acts assign’d?
“ Brave, learn’d or wise, if some their favourites call,
“ Have they the titles or the praise from all?
“ Not so, but others will the brave disdain
“ As rash, and deem the sons of wisdom vain;
“ The self-same mind shall scorn or kindness move,
“ And the same deed attract contempt and love.
“ So all the powers, who move the human soul,
“ With all the passions, who the will control,

-
- " Have various names.—One giv'n by truth divine,
" (As *Simulation* thus was fix'd for mine,) *Simulation*
" The rest by man, who now, as wisdom's, prize
" My secret counsels, now as art despise;
" One hour, as just, those counsels they embrace,
" And spurn, the next, as pitiful and base.
" Thee too, my child, those fools as *Cunning* fly, *Cunning*
" Who on thy counsel and thy craft rely,
" That worthy craft in others they condemn :
" But 'tis their prudence, while conducting them.
" Be FLATTERY, then, thy happy infant's name,
" Let *Honour* scorn her and let *Wit* defame ;
" Let all be true that envy dooms, yet all,
" Not on herself, but on her name, shall fall ;
" While she thy fortune and her own shall raise,
" And decent *Truth* be call'd, and lov'd, as mode
" *Praise*.

“ O happy child ! the glorious day shall shine,

“ When every ear shall to thy speech incline,

“ Thy words alluring and thy voice divine :

“ The sullen pedant and the sprightly wit,

“ To hear thy soothing eloquence, shall sit ;

“ And both, abjuring Flattery, will agree

“ That truth inspires, and they must honour thee.

“ *Envy* himself shall to thy accents bend,

“ Force a faint smile and sullenly attend,

“ When thou shalt call him *Virtue's jealous friend*,

“ Whose bosom glows with generous rage to find

“ How fools and knaves are flatter'd by mankind.

“ The sage retir'd, who spends alone his days,

“ And flies th' obstreperous voice of public praise ;

“ The vain, the vulgar cry,—shall gladly meet,

“ And bid thee welcome to his still retreat ;

“ Much will he wonder, how thou cam'st to find

“ A man to glory dead, to peace consign'd.

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- “ O Fame! he'll cry, (for he will call thee Fame,)
“ From thee I fly, from thee conceal my name ;
“ But thou shalt say, Though Genius takes his flight,
“ He leaves behind a glorious train of light,
“ And hides in vain :—yet prudent he that flies
“ The flatterer's art, and for himself is wise.
“ Yes, happy child! I mark th' approaching day,
“ When warring natures will confess thy sway ;
“ When thou shalt Saturn's golden reign restore,
“ And vice and folly shall be known no more.
“ *Pride* shall not then in human-kind have place,
“ Chang'd by thy skill, to *Dignity* and *Grace* ;
“ While *Shame*, who now betrays the inward sense
“ Of secret ill, shall be thy *Diffidence* ;
“ *Avarice* shall thenceforth prudent *Forecast* be,
“ And bloody *Vengeance*, *Magnanimity* ;
“ The lavish tongue shall honest truths impart,
“ The lavish hand shall show the generous heart,
“ And *Indiscretion* be, contempt of art :

-
- “ Folly and vice shall then, no longer known,
“ Be, this as virtue, that as wisdom, shown.
“ Then shall the *Robber*, as the hero, rise
“ To seize the good that churlish law denies;
“ Throughout the world shall rove the generous band,
“ And deal the gifts of heaven from hand to hand.
“ In thy blest days no tyrant shall be seen,
“ Thy gracious kings shall rule contented men;
“ In thy blest days shall not a rebel be,
“ But patriots all and well approv'd of thee.
“ Such powers are thine, that man, by thee, shall wrest
“ The gainful secret from the cautious breast;
“ Nor then, with all his care, the good retains,
“ But yield to thee the secret and the gain.
“ In vain, shall much experience guard the heart
“ Against the charm of thy prevailing art;
“ Admitted once, so soothing is thy strain,
“ It comes the sweeter, when it comes again;

- “ And when confest as thine, what mind so strong,
“ Forbears the pleasure it indulg’d so long?
“ Soft’ner of every ill ! of all our woes
“ The balmy solace ! friend of fiercest foes !
“ Begin thy reign and like the morning rise !
“ Bring joy, bring beauty, to our eager eyes ;
“ Break on the drowsy world like opening day,
“ While grace and gladness join thy flow’ry way ;
“ While every voice is praise, while every heart is gay.
“ From thee, all prospects shall new beauties take,
“ ’Tis thine to seek them and ’tis thine to make ;
“ On the cold fen, I see thee turn thine eyes,
“ Its mists recede, its chilling vapour flies ;
“ Th’ enraptur’d lord th’ improving ground surveys,
“ And for his Eden, asks the traveller’s praise,
“ Which yet, unview’d of thee, a bog had been,
“ Where spongy rushes hide the plashy green.
“ I see thee breathing on the barren moor,
“ That seems to bloom although so bleak before ;

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- “ There, if beneath the *gorze* the primrose spring,
“ Or the pied *daisy* smile below the *ling*,
“ They shall new charms, at thy command, disclose,
“ And none shall miss the *myrtle* or the *rose*.
“ The wiry *moss*, that whitens all the hill,
“ Shall live a beauty by thy matchless skill;
“ *Gale** from the bog shall yield Arabian balm,
“ And the *grey willow* wave a golden palm.
“ I see thee smiling in the pictur'd room,
“ Now breathing beauty, now reviving bloom ;
“ There, each immortal name, 'tis thine to give,
“ To graceless forms, and bid the lumber live.
“ Should'st thou coarse boors or gloomy martyrs see,
“ These shall thy *Guidos*, those thy *Teniers* be ;
“ There shalt thou *Raphaël's* saints and angels trace,
“ There make for *Reubens* and for *Reynolds* place,
“ And all the pride of art shall find, in her, disgrace.
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* “ *Myrica gale*,” a shrub growing in boggy and fenny grounds.

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- “ Delight of either sex ! thy reign commence ;
“ With balmy sweetness, soothe the weary sense,
“ And to the sickening soul thy cheering aid dispense.
“ Queen of the mind ! thy golden age begin ;
“ In mortal bosoms varnish shame and sin,
“ Let all be fair without, let all be calm within.”

The Vision fled, the happy mother rose,
Kiss'd the fair infant, smil'd at all her foes,
And FLATTERY made her name :—her reign began,
Her own dear sex she rul'd, then vanquish'd man ;
A smiling friend, to every class, she spoke,
Assum'd their manners and their habits took ;
Her, for her humble mien, the modest lov'd ;
Her cheerful looks, the light and gay approv'd ;
The just beheld her, firm ; the valiant, brave ;
Her mirth the free, her silence pleas'd the grave ;
Zeal heard her voice, and, as he preach'd aloud,
Well-pleas'd he caught her whispers from the crowd,

(Those whispers, soothing-sweet to every ear,
Which some refuse to pay, but none to hear) :
Shame fled her presence ; at her gentle strain,
Care softly smil'd and guilt forgot its pain ;
'The wretched thought, the happy found her true,
The learn'd confess'd, that she their merits knew ;
The rich—could they a constant friend condemn?
The poor believ'd—for who should flatter them ?

Thus on her name, while all disgrace attend,
In every creature she beholds a friend.



REFLECTIONS

UPON THE SUBJECT——

Quid juvat errores, mersâ jam puppe, faleri?

Quid lacrymæ delicta juvant commissa secuta?

Claudian. in Eutrop. lib. ii. lin. 7.

What avails it, when shipwreck'd, that error appears?
Are the crimes we commit, wash'd away by our tears?



Reflections.

“ Quid juvat errores, mersâ jam puppe, fateri ?

“ Quid lacrymæ delicta juvant commissa secutæ ?”

Claudian. in Eutrop. lib. ii. lin. 7.

WHEN all the fiercest passions cease,

(The glory and disgrace of youth) ;

When the deluded soul, in peace,

Can listen to the voice of truth ;

When we are taught in whom to trust,

And how to spare, to spend, to give ;

(Our prudence kind, our pity just,)

'Tis then we rightly learn to live.

Its weakness when the body feels,
Nor danger in contempt defies ;
To reason, when desire appeals,
When, on experience, hope relies ;
When every passing hour we prize,
Nor rashly on our follies spend ;
But use it as it quickly flies,
With sober aim, to serious end ;
When prudence bounds our utmost views,
And bids us wrath and wrong forgive ;
When we can calmly gain or lose,—
'Tis then we rightly learn to live.

Yet thus, when we our way discern,
And can upon our care depend,
To travel safely, when we learn,
Behold! we're near our journey's end.

We've trod the maze of error round,
Long wand'ring in the winding glade;
And now the torch of truth is found,
It only shows us where we stray'd :
Light for ourselves, what is it worth,
When we no more our way can choose ?
For others when we hold it forth,
They, in their pride, the boon refuse.

By long experience taught, we now
Can rightly judge of friends and foes,
Can all the worth of these allow,
And all their faults discern in those ;
Relentless hatred, erring love,
We can for sacred truth forego ;
We can the warmest friend reprove,
And bear to praise the fiercest foe :

To what effect ? our friends are gone,
 Beyond reproof, regard, or care ;
 And of our foes remains there one,
 The mild relenting thoughts to share ?

Now 'tis our boast that we can quell
 The wildest passions in their rage ;
 Can their destructive force repel,
 And their impetuous wrath assuage :
 Ah ! Virtue, dost thou arm, when now
 This bold rebellious race are fled ;
 When all these tyrants rest, and thou
 Art warring with the mighty dead ?
 Revenge, ambition, scorn, and pride,
 And strong desire and fierce disdain,
 The giant-brood, by thee defied,
 Lo ! Time's resistless strokes have slain.

Yet Time, who could that race subdue,
 (O'erpow'ring strength, appeasing rage,)
Leaves yet a persevering crew,
 To try the failing powers of age.
Vex'd by the constant call of these,
 Virtue awhile for conquest tries,
But weary grown and fond of ease,
 She makes with them a compromise :
Av'rice himself she gives to rest,
 But rules him with her strict commands ;
Bids Pity touch his torpid breast,
 And Justice hold his eager hands.

Yet is there nothing men can do,
 When chilling Age comes creeping on ?
Cannot we yet some good pursue ?
 Are talents buried ? genius gone ?

If passions slumber in the breast,
If follies from the heart be fled ;
Of laurels let us go in quest,
And place them on the poet's head.

Yes, we'll redeem the wasted time,
And to neglected studies flee ;
We'll build again the lofty rhyme,
Or live, Philosophy, with thee ;
For reasoning clear, for flight sublime,
Eternal fame reward shall be ;
And to what glorious heights we'll climb,
Th' admiring crowd shall envying see.

Begin the song ! begin the theme !—
Alas ! and is Invention dead ?
Dream we no more the golden dream ?
Is Mem'ry with her treasures fled ?

Yes! 'tis too late,—now Reason guides

The mind, sole judge in all debate ;

And thus th' important point decides,

For laurels, 'tis, alas! too late.

What is possest, we may retain,

But for new conquests strive in vain.

Beware then, age, that what was won,

In life's past labours, studies, views,

Be lost not, now the labour's done,

When all thy part is,—not to lose :

When thou canst toil or gain no more,

Destroy not what was gain'd before.

For, all that's gain'd of all that's good,

When time shall his weak frame destroy,

(Their use then rightly understood,)

Shall man, in happier state, enjoy.



SIR EUSTACE GREY.

Scene.—A MADHOUSE.

Persons.

VISITOR, PHYSICIAN, AND PATIENT.

Veris miscens falsa.—

Seneca in Herc. furente.

VISITOR.

I'LL know no more ;—the heart is torn

By views of woe, we cannot heal ;

Long shall I see these things forlorn,

And oft again their griefs shall feel,

As each upon the mind shall steal ;

That wan projector's mystic style,
That lumpish idiot leering by,
That peevish idler's ceaseless wile,
And that poor maiden's half-form'd smile,
While struggling for the full-drawn sigh !—
I'll know no more.

PHYSICIAN.

—Yes, turn again ;
Then speed to happier scenes thy way,
When thou hast view'd, what yet remain,
The ruins of Sir *Eustace Grey*,
The sport of madness, misery's prey :
But he will no historian need,
His cares, his crimes will he display,
And show (as one from frenzy freed)
The proud-lost mind, the rash-done deed.

That cell to him is *Greyling Hall* :—

Approach ; he 'll bid thee welcome there ;
Will sometimes for his servant call,
And sometimes point the vacant chair :
He can, with free and easy air,
Appear attentive and polite ;
Can veil his woes in manners fair,
And pity with respect excite.

PATIENT.

Who comes ?—Approach !—'tis kindly done :—
My learn'd Physician, and a Friend,
Their pleasures quit, to visit one,
Who cannot to their ease attend,
Nor joys bestow, nor comforts lend,
As when I liv'd so blest, so well,
And dreamt not I must soon contend
With those malignant powers of hell.

PHYSICIAN.

“ Less warmth, Sir Eustace, or we go.”—

PATIENT.

See ! I am calm as infant-love,
A very child, but one of woe,
Whom you should pity, not reprove :—
But men at ease, who never strove
With passions wild, will calmly show,
How soon we may their ills remove,
And masters of their madness grow.

Some twenty years I think are gone,—
(Time flies, I know not how, away,)
The sun upon no happier shone,
Nor prouder man, than *Eustace Grey*.

Ask where you would, and all would say,
The man admir'd and prais'd of all,
By rich and poor, by grave and gay,
Was the young lord of *Greyling Hall*.

Yes ! I had youth and rosy health ;
Was nobly form'd, as man might be ;
For sickness then, of all my wealth,
I never gave a single fee :
The ladies fair, the maidens free,
Were all accustom'd then to say,
Who would a handsome figure see,
Should look upon Sir *Eustace Grey*.

He had a frank and pleasant look,
A cheerful eye and accent bland ;
His very speech and manner spoke
The generous heart, the open hand ;

About him all was gay or grand,
He had the praise of great and small;
He bought, improv'd, projected, plann'd,
And reign'd a prince at Greyling Hall.

My Lady!—she was all we love;
All praise (to speak her worth) is faint;
Her manners show'd the yielding dove,
Her morals, the seraphic saint:
She never breath'd nor look'd complaint;
No equal upon earth had she:—
Now, what is this fair thing I paint?
Alas! as all that live, shall be.

There was, beside, a gallant youth,
And him my bosom's friend, I had:—
Oh! I was rich in very truth,
It made me proud—it made me mad!—

Yes, I was lost—but there was cause!—

Where stood my tale?—I cannot find—

But I had all mankind's applause,

And all the smiles of womankind.

There were two cherub-things beside,

A gracious girl, a glorious boy ;

Yet more to swell my full-blown pride,

To varnish higher my fading joy,

Pleasures were ours without alloy,

Nay Paradise,—till my frail Eve

Our bliss was tempted to destroy ;

Deceiv'd and fated to deceive.

But I deserv'd ; for all that time,

When I was lov'd, admir'd, caress'd,

There was within, each secret crime,

Unfelt, uncancell'd, unconfess'd :

I never then my God address'd,
In grateful praise or humble prayer ;
And if His Word was not my jest !
(Dread thought !) it never was my care.

I doubted :—fool I was to doubt !
If that all-piercing eye could see,—
If He who looks all worlds throughout,
Would so minute and careful be,
As to perceive and punish me :—
With man I would be great and high,
But with my God so lost, that He,
In his large view, should pass me by.

Thus blest with children, friend, and wife,
Blest far beyond the vulgar lot ;
Of all that gladdens human life,
Where was the good, that I had not ?

But my vile heart had sinful spot,
And Heaven beheld its deep'ning stain,
Eternal justice I forgot,
And mercy sought not to obtain.

Come near,—I'll softly speak the rest !—
Alas ! 'tis known to all the crowd,
Her guilty love was all confest ;
And his, who so much truth avow'd,
My faithless friends.—In pleasure proud
I sat, when these curs'd tidings came ;
Their guilt, their flight was told aloud,
And envy smil'd to hear my shame !

I call'd on Vengeance ; at the word
She came :—Can I the deed forget ?
I held the sword, th' accursed sword,
The blood of his false heart made wet :

And that fair victim paid her debt,
She pin'd, she died, she loath'd to live;—
I saw her dying—see her yet:
Fair fallen thing! my rage forgive!

Those cherubs still, my life to bless,
Were left; could I my fears remove,
Sad fears that check'd each fond caress,
And poison'd all parental love?
Yet that, with jealous feelings strove,
And would at last have won my will,
Had I not, wretch! been doom'd to prove
Th' extremes of mortal good and ill.

In youth! health! joy! in beauty's pride!
They droop'd: as flowers when blighted bow,
The dire infection came:—They died,
And I was curs'd—as I am now——

Nay, frown not, angry friend,—allow
That I was deeply, sorely tried ;
Hear then, and you must wonder how
I could such storms and strifes abide.

Storms!—not that clouds embattled make,
When they afflict this earthly globe ;
But such as with their terrors shake
Man's breast, and to the bottom probe ;
They make the hypocrite disrobe,
They try us all, if false or true ;
For this, one devil had pow'r on *Job* ;
And I was long the slave of two.

PHYSICIAN.

Peace, peace, my friend ; these subjects fly ;
Collect thy thoughts—go calmly on.—

Then those ill-favour'd **ONES***, whom none
But my unhappy eyes could view,
Led me, with wild emotion, on,
And, with resistless terror, drew.
Through lands we fled, o'er seas we flew,
And halted on a boundless plain ;
Where nothing fed, nor breath'd nor grew,
But silence rul'd the still domain.

Upon that boundless plain, below,
The setting sun's last rays were shed,
And gave a mild and sober glow,
Where all were still, asleep or dead ;
Vast ruins in the midst were spread,
Pillars and pediments sublime,
Where the grey moss had form'd a bed,
And cloth'd the crumbling spoils of time.

* Vide Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.

There was I fix'd, I know not how,
Condemn'd for untold years to stay :
Yet years were not ;—one dreadful *Now*,
Endur'd no change of night or day ;
The same mild evening's sleeping ray
Shone softly-solemn and serene,
And all that time, I gaz'd away,
The setting sun's sad rays were seen.

At length a-moment's sleep stole on,—
Again came my commission'd foes ;
Again through sea and land we're gone,
No peace, no respite, no repose :
Above the dark broad sea we rose,
We ran through bleak and frozen land ;
I had no strength, their strength t' oppos
An infant in a giant's hand.

They plac'd me where those streamers play,
Those nimble beams of brilliant light ;
It would the stoutest heart dismay,
To see, to feel, that dreadful sight :
So swift, so pure, so cold, so bright,
They pierc'd my frame with icy wound,
And all that half-year's polar night,
Those dancing streamers wrapt me round.

Slowly that darkness pass'd away,
When down upon the earth I fell,—
Some hurried sleep was mine by day ;
But, soon as toll'd the evening bell,
They forc'd me on, where ever dwell
Far-distant men in cities fair,
Cities of whom no trav'lers tell,
Nor feet but mine were wanderers there.

Their watchmen stare, and stand aghast,
As on we hurry through the dark ;
The watch-light blinks, as we go past,
The watch-dog shrinks and fears to bark ;
The watch-tower's bell sounds shrill ; and, hark !
The free wind blows—we've left the town—
A wide sepulchral ground I mark,
And on a tomb-stone place me down.

What monuments of mighty dead !
What tombs of various kinds are found !
And stones erect their shadows shed
On humble graves, with wickers bound ;
Some risen fresh, above the ground,
Some level with the native clay,
What sleeping millions wait the sound,
“ Arise, ye dead, and come away ! ”

Alas ! they stay not for that call ;

Spare me this woe ! ye Dæmons, spare !—

They come ! the shrowded shadows all,

'Tis more than mortal brain can bear ;

Rustling they rise, they sternly glare

At man upheld by vital breath ;

Who, led by wicked fiends, should dare

To join the shadowy troops of death !

Yes ! I have felt all man can feel,

Till he shall pay his nature's debt ;

Ills that no hope has strength to heal,

No mind the comfort to forget :

Whatever cares the heart can fret,

The spirits wear, the temper gall,

Woe, want, dread, anguish, all beset

My sinful soul !—together all !

Those fiends, upon a shaking fen,
Fix'd me, in dark tempestuous night;
There never trod the foot of men,
There flock'd the fowl in wint'ry flight;
There danc'd the moor's deceitful light,
Above the pool where sedges grow;
And when the morning-sun shone bright,
It shone upon a field of snow.

They hung me on a bough, so small,
The rook could build her nest no higher;
They fix'd me on the trembling ball,
That crowns the steeple's quiv'ring spire;
They set me where the seas retire,
But drown with their returning tide;
And made me flee the mountain's fire,
When rolling from its burning side.

I've hung upon the ridgy steep
Of cliffs, and held the rambling brier ;
I've plung'd below the billowy deep,
Where air was sent me to respire ;
I've been where hungry wolves retire ;
And (to complete my woes) I've ran
Where Bedlam's crazy crew conspire
Against the life of reasoning man.

I've furl'd in storms the flapping sail,
By hanging from the top-mast-head ;
I've serv'd the vilest slaves in jail,
And pick'd the dunghill's spoil for bread ;
I've made the badger's hole my bed,
I've wander'd with a gipsy crew,
I've dreaded all the guilty dread,
And done what they would fear to do.

On sand where ebbs and flows the flood,
Midway they plac'd and bade me die;
Propt on my staff, I stoutly stood
When the swift waves came rolling by;
And high they rose, and still more high,
Till my lips drank the bitter brine;
I sobb'd convuls'd, then cast mine eye
And saw the tide's re-flowing sign.

And then, my dreams were such as nought
Could yield but my unhappy case;
I've been of thousand devils caught,
And thrust into that horrid place,
Where reign dismay, despair, disgrace;
Furies with iron fangs were there,
To torture that accursed race,
Doom'd to dismay, disgrace, despair.

Harmless I was ; yet hunted down
For treasons, to my soul unfit ;
I've been pursu'd through many a town,
For crimes that petty knaves commit ;
I've been adjudg'd t' have lost my wit,
Because I preach'd so loud and well,
And thrown into the dungeon's pit,
For trampling on the pit of hell.

Such were the evils, man of sin,
That I was fated to sustain ;
And add to all, without—within,
A soul defil'd with every stain,
That man's reflecting mind can pain ;
That pride, wrong, rage, despair can make ;
In fact, they'd nearly touch'd my brain,
And reason on her throne would shake.

But pity will the vilest seek,
If punish'd guilt will not repine,—
I heard a heavenly teacher speak,
And felt the SUN of MERCY shine :
I hail'd the light ! the birth divine !
And then was seal'd among the few ;
Those angry fiends beheld the sign,
And from me in an instant flew.

Come hear how thus the charmers cry,
To wandering sheep the strays of sin,
While some the wicket-gate pass by,
And some will knock and enter in :
Full joyful 'tis a soul to win,
For he that winneth souls is wise ;
Now hark ! the holy strains begin,
And thus the sainted preacher cries* :—

* It has been suggested to me, that this change from restlessness to repose, in the mind of *Sir Eustace*, is wrought by

- “ Pilgrim, burthen'd with thy sin,
“ Come the way to Zion's gate,
“ There, till mercy let thee in,
“ Knock and weep and watch and wait.
“ Knock!—He knows the sinner's cry:
“ Weep!—He loves the mourner's tears:
“ Watch!—for saving grace is nigh:
“ Wait,—till heavenly light appears.
- “ Hark! it is the bridegroom's voice;
“ Welcome, pilgrim, to thy rest;
“ Now within the gate rejoice,
“ Safe and seal'd and bought and blest!
-

a methodistic call; and it is admitted to be such: a sober and rational conversion could not have happened while the disorder of the brain continued: Yet the verses which follow, in a different measure, are not intended to make any religious persuasion appear ridiculous; they are to be supposed as the effect of memory in the disordered mind of the speaker, and, though evidently enthusiastic in respect to language, are not meant to convey any impropriety of sentiment.

“ Safe—from all the lures of vice,
“ Seal’d—by signs the chosen know,
“ Bought—by love and life the price,
“ Blest—the mighty debt to owe.

“ Holy Pilgrim ! what for thee,
“ In a world like this remain ?
“ From thy guarded breast shall flee,
“ Fear and shame, and doubt and pain.
“ Fear—the hope of heaven shall fly,
“ Shame—from glory’s view retire,
“ Doubt—in certain rapture die,
“ Pain—in endless bliss expire.”

But though my day of grace was come,
Yet still my days of grief I find ;
The former clouds’ collected gloom,
Still sadden the reflecting mind ;

The soul, to evil things consign'd,
Will of their evil some retain ;
The man will seem to earth inclin'd,
And will not look erect again.

Thus, though elect, I feel it hard,
To lose what I possess'd before,
To be from all my wealth debarr'd,—
The brave *Sir Eustace* is no more :
But old I wax and passing poor,
Stern, rugged men my conduct view ;
They chide my wish, they bar my door,
'Tis hard—I weep—you see I do.—

Must you, my friends, no longer stay ?
Thus quickly all my pleasures end ?
But I'll remember, when I pray,
My kind Physician and his Friend ;

And those sad hours, you deign to spend
With me, I shall requite them all ;
Sir Eustace for his friends shall send,
And thank their love at *Greyling Hall*.

VISITOR.

The poor Sir Eustace !—Yet his hope
Leads him to think of joys again ;
And when his earthly visions droop,
His views of heavenly kind remain :—
But whence that meek and humbled strain,
That spirit wounded, lost, resign'd ;
Would not so proud a soul disdain
The madness of the poorest mind ?

PHYSICIAN.

No ! for the more he swell'd with pride,
The more he felt misfortune's blow ;

Disgrace and grief he could not hide,
And poverty had laid him low :
Thus shame and sorrow working slow,
At length this humble spirit gave ;
Madness on these began to grow,
And bound him to his fiends a slave.

Though the wild thoughts had touch'd his brain,
Then was he free:—So, forth he ran ;
To soothe or threat, alike were vain :
He spake of fiends ; look'd wild and wan ;
Year after year, the hurried man
Obey'd those fiends from place to place ;
Till his religious change began
To form a frenzied child of grace.

For, as the fury lost its strength,
The mind repos'd ; by slow degrees,

Came lingering hope, and brought at length,
To the tormented spirit, ease :
This slave of sin, whom fiends could seize,
Felt or believ'd their power had end ;—
“ 'Tis faith,” he cried, “ my bosom frees,
“ And now my SAVIOUR is my friend.”

But ah ! though time can yield relief,
And soften woes it cannot cure ;
Would we not suffer pain and grief,
To have our reason sound and sure ?
Then let us keep our bosoms pure,
Our fancy's favourite flights suppress ;
Prepare the body to endure,
And bend the mind to meet distress ;
And then His guardian care implore,
Whom dæmons dread and men adore.



THE
HALL OF JUSTICE:
A Poem.
IN TWO PARTS.



THE
HALL OF JUSTICE.

Part the First.

Confiteor facere hoc annos ; sed et altera causa est,
Anxietas animi, continuusque dolor.

Ovid.

MAGISTRATE, VAGRANT, CONSTABLE, &c.

VAGRANT.

TAKE, take away thy barbarous hand,
And let me to thy master speak ;
Remit awhile the harsh command,
And hear me, or my heart will break.

MAGISTRATE.

Fond wretch ! and what canst thou relate,
But deeds of sorrow, shame, and sin ?
Thy crime is prov'd, thou know'st thy fate ;
But come, thy tale ! begin, begin !—

VAGRANT.

My crime !—This sick'ning child to feed,
I seiz'd the food, your witness saw ;
I knew your laws forbade the deed,
But yielded to a stronger law.

Know'st thou, to Nature's great command,
All human laws are frail and weak ?
Nay ! frown not—stay his eager hand,
And hear me, or my heart will break.



In this, th' adopted babe I hold
With anxious fondness to my breast,
My heart's sole comfort I behold,
More dear than life, when life was blest;
I saw her pining, fainting, cold,
I begg'd—but vain was my request.

I saw the tempting food, and seiz'd—
My infant-sufferer found relief;
And, in the pilfer'd treasure pleas'd,
Smil'd on my guilt and hush'd my grief.

But I have griefs of other kind,
Troubles and sorrows more severe;
Give me to ease my tortur'd mind,
Lend to my woes a patient ear;
And let me—if I may not find
A friend to help—find one to hear.

~~Yet nameless let me plead—my name~~
Would only wake the cry of scorn;
A child of sin, conceiv'd in shame,
Brought forth in woe, to misery born.

My mother dead, my father lost,
I wander'd with a vagrant crew;
A common care, a common cost,
Their sorrows and their sins I knew;
With them, on want and error forc'd,
Like them, I base and guilty grew.



Few are my years, not so my crimes;
The age, which these sad looks declare,
Is sorrow's work, it is not time's,
And I am old in shame and care.

Taught to believe the world a place
Where every stranger was a foe,

Train'd in the arts that mark our race,
To what new people could I go?
Could I a better life embrace,
Or live as virtue dictates ! No !—

So through the land, I wandering went,
And little found of grief or joy ;
But lost my bosom's sweet content,
When first I lov'd—the Gipsy-Boy.

A sturdy youth he was and tall,
His looks would all his soul declare,
His piercing eyes were deep and small,
And strongly curl'd his raven-hair.

Yes, Aaron had each manly charm,
All in the May of youthful pride,
He scarcely fear'd his father's arm,
And every other arm defied.—

Oft, when they grew in anger warm,
(Whom will not love and power divide?)
I rose, their wrathful souls to calm,
Not yet in sinful combat tried.

His father was our party's chief,
And dark and dreadful was his look,
His presence fill'd my heart with grief,
Although to me he kindly spoke.

With Aaron I delighted went,
His favour was my bliss and pride;
In growing hope our days we spent,
Love, growing charms in either spied,
It saw them, all which Nature lent,
It lent them, all which she denied.

Could I the father's kindness prize,
Or grateful looks on him bestow ;

Whom I beheld in wrath arise, . . .

When Aaron sank beneath his blow ?

He drove him down with wicked hand,

It was a dreadful sight to see ;

Then vex'd him, till he left the land,

And told his cruel love to me ;—

The clan were all at his command,

Whatever his command might be.

The night was dark, the lanes were deep,

And one by one, they took their way ;

He bade me lay me down and sleep,

I only wept and wish'd for day.

Accursed be the love he bore,

Accursed was the force he us'd,

So let him of his God implore

For mercy, and be so refus'd !

You frown again,—to show my wrong,
Can I in gentle language speak ?
My woes are deep, my words are strong,—
And hear me, or my heart will break.

MAGISTRATE.

I hear thy words, I feel thy pain ;
Forbear awhile to speak thy woes ;
Receive our aid, and then again
The story of thy life disclose.

For, though seduc'd and led astray,
Thou'st travell'd far and wander'd long ;
Thy God hath seen thee all the way,
And all the turns that led thee wrong.

THE
HALL OF JUSTICE.

Part the Second.

Quondam ridentes oculi, nunc fonte perenni
Deplorant pœnas nocte dieque suas.

Corn. Galli Eleg.

MAGISTRATE.

COME, now again thy woes impart,
Tell all thy sorrows, all thy sin ;
We cannot heal the throbbing heart,
Till we discern the wounds within..

Compunction weeps our guilt away,

The sinner's safety is his pain ;

Such pangs for our offences pay,

And these severer griefs are gain.

VAGRANT.

The son came back—he found us wed,

Then dreadful was the oath he swore ;—

His way through *Blackburn* Forest led,—

His father we beheld no more.

Of all our daring clan, not one

Would on the doubtful subject dwell ;

For all esteem'd the injur'd son,

And fear'd the tale, which he could tell.

But I had mightier cause for fear,

For slow and mournful round my bed,

I saw a dreadful form appear,—

It came when I and Aaron wed.

(Yes! we were wed, I know my crime,—

We slept beneath the elmin tree ;

But I was grieving all the time,

And Aaron frown'd my tears to see.

For he not yet had felt the pain,

That rankles in a wounded breast ;

He wak'd to sin, then slept again,

Forsook his God, yet took his rest.—

But I was forc'd to feign delight,

And joy in mirth and music sought,—

And mem'ry now recalls the night,

With such surprise and horror fraught,

That reason felt a moment's flight,

And left a mind, to madness wrought.)

When waking, on my heaving breast
I felt a hand as cold as death ;
A sudden fear my voice suppress'd,
A chilling terror stopp'd my breath.—

I seem'd—no words can utter how !
For there my father-husband stood,—
And thus he said :—" Will God allow,
" The great avenger, just and good,
" A wife, to break her marriage vow ?
" A son, to shed his father's blood?"

I trembled at the dismal sounds,
But vainly strove a word to say ;
So, pointing to his bleeding wounds,
The threat'ning spectre stalk'd away.*

* The state of mind here described, will account for a vision of this nature, without having recourse to any supernatural appearance.

I brought a lovely daughter forth,
His father's child, in Aaron's bed ;
He took her from me in his wrath,
“ Where is my child ? ” — ‘ Thy child is dead.’

’Twas false—we wander’d far and wide,
Through town and country, field and fen,
Till Aaron, fighting, fell and died,
And I became a wife again.

I then was young :—my husband sold
My fancied charms for wicked price ;
He gave me oft, for sinful gold,
The slave, but not the friend of vice :—
Behold me, Heav’n ! my pains behold,
And let them for my sins suffice !

The wretch who lent me thus for gain,
Despis’d me when my youth was fled ;

Then came disease and brought me pain:—

Come, death, and bear me to the dead !

For though I grieve, my grief is vain,

And fruitless all the tears I shed.

True, I was not to virtue train'd,

Yet well I knew my deeds were ill ;

By each offence my heart was pain'd,

I wept, but I offended still ;

My better thoughts my life disdain'd,

But yet the viler led my will.

My husband died, and now no more

My smile was sought, or ask'd my hand,

A widow'd vagrant, vile and poor,

Beneath a vagrant's vile command.

Ceaseless I rov'd the country round,

To win my bread by fraudulent arts,

And long a poor subsistence found,
By spreading nets for simple hearts.

Though poor, and abject, and despis'd,
Their fortunes to the crowd I told ;
I gave the young the love they priz'd,
And promis'd wealth to bless the old ;
Schemes for the doubtful I devis'd,
And charms for the forsaken sold.

At length for arts like these confin'd
In prison with a lawless crew,
I soon perceiv'd a kindred mind,
And there my long-lost daughter knew.

His father's child, whom Aaron gave
To wander with a distant clan,
The miseries of the world to brave,
And be the slave of vice and man.

She knew my name—we met in pain,
Our parting pangs can I express ?
She sail'd a convict o'er the main,
And left an heir to her distress.

This is that heir to shame and pain,
For whom I only could descry
A world of trouble and disdain :
Yet, could I bear to see her die,
Or stretch her feeble hands in vain,
And, weeping, beg of me supply ?

No ! though the fate thy mother knew,
Was shameful ! shameful though thy race
Have wander'd all, a lawless crew,
Outcasts, despis'd in every place ;

Yet as the dark and muddy tide,
When far from its polluted source,

Becomes more pure, and, purified,
Flows in a clear and happy course ;—
In thee, dear infant ! so may end
Our shame, in thee our sorrows cease !
And thy pure course will then extend,
In floods of joy, o'er vales of peace.

Oh ! by the GOD who loves to spare,
Deny me not the boon I crave ;
Let this lov'd child your mercy share,
And let me find a peaceful grave ;
Make her yet spotless soul your care,
And let my sins their portion have,
Her for a better fate prepare,
And punish whom 'twere sin to save !

MAGISTRATE.

Recall the word, renounce the thought,
Command thy heart and bend thy knee.

There is to all a pardon brought,
A ransom rich, assur'd and free ;
'Tis full when found, 'tis found if sought,
Oh ! seek it, till 'tis seal'd to thee.

VAGRANT.

But how my pardon shall I know ?

MAGISTRATE.

By feeling dread that 'tis not sent,
By tears for sin that freely flow,
By grief, that all thy tears are spent,
By thoughts on that great debt we owe,
With all the mercy God has lent,
By suffering what thou canst not show,
Yet showing how thine heart is rent,
Till thou canst feel thy bosom glow,
And say, " MY SAVIOUR, I REPENT ! "

WOMAN!

MR. LEDYARD, as quoted by M. PARKE, in his
Travels into Africk.

“ To a Woman I never addressed myself in the language of
“ decency and friendship, without receiving a decent and
“ friendly answer. If I was hungry or thirsty, wet or sick,
“ they did not hesitate, like Men, to perform a generous
“ action: in so free and kind a manner did they contribute
“ to my relief, that if I was dry, I drank the sweetest
“ draught; and if hungry, I ate the coarsest morsel with a
“ double relish.”

PLACE the white-man on Africk's coast,

Whose swarthy sons in blood delight,

Who of their scorn to Europe boast,

And paint their very dæmons white :

There, while the sterner sex disdains
 'To soothe the woes they cannot feel,
Woman will strive to heal his pains,
 And weep for those she cannot heal :
Hers is warm pity's sacred glow ;
 From all her stores, she bears a part,
And bids the spring of hope re-flow,
 That languish'd in the fainting heart.

“ What though so pale his haggard face,
 “ So sunk and sad his looks,”—she cries ;
“ And far unlike our nobler race,
 “ With crisped locks and rolling eyes ;
 “ Yet misery marks him of our kind,
 “ We see him lost, alone, afraid ;
 “ And pangs of body, griefs in mind,
 “ Pronounce him man and ask our aid.

-
- “ Perhaps in some far distant shore,
“ There are who in these forms delight ;
“ Whose milky features please them more,
“ Than ours of jet thus burnish'd bright ;
“ Of such may be his weeping wife,
“ Such children for their sire may call,
“ And if we spare his ebbing life,
“ Our kindness may preserve them all.”

Thus her compassion Woman shows,
Beneath the line her acts are these ;
Nor the wide waste of Lapland-snows
Can her warm flow of pity freeze :—
“ From some sad land the stranger comes,
“ Where joys, like ours, are never found ;
“ Let's soothe him in our happy homes,
“ Where freedom sits, with plenty crown'd.

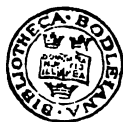
“ 'Tis good the fainting soul to cheer,
“ To see the famish'd stranger fed ;
“ To milk for him the mother-deer,
“ To smooth for him the furry bed.
“ The Powers above, our Lapland bless,
“ With good no other people know ;
“ T' enlarge the joys that we possess,
“ By feeling those that we bestow !”

Thus in extremes of cold and heat,
Where wandering man may trace his kind ;
Where-ever grief and want retreat,
In Woman they compassion find ;
She makes the female breast her seat,
And dictates mercy to the mind.

Man may the sterner virtues know,
Determin'd justice, truth severe :

But female hearts with pity glow,
And Woman holds affliction dear ;
For guiltless woes her sorrows flow,
And suffering vice compels her tear ;
'Tis hers to soothe the ills below,
And bid life's fairer views appear ;
To Woman's gentle kind we owe,
What comforts and delights us here ;
They its gay hopes on youth bestow,
And care they soothe and age they cheer.

FINIS.



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